No. 216 (New Series). Vol. 5. May 9, 1936

The PASSING SHOW

2D

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by an AIR CIRCUS GIRL

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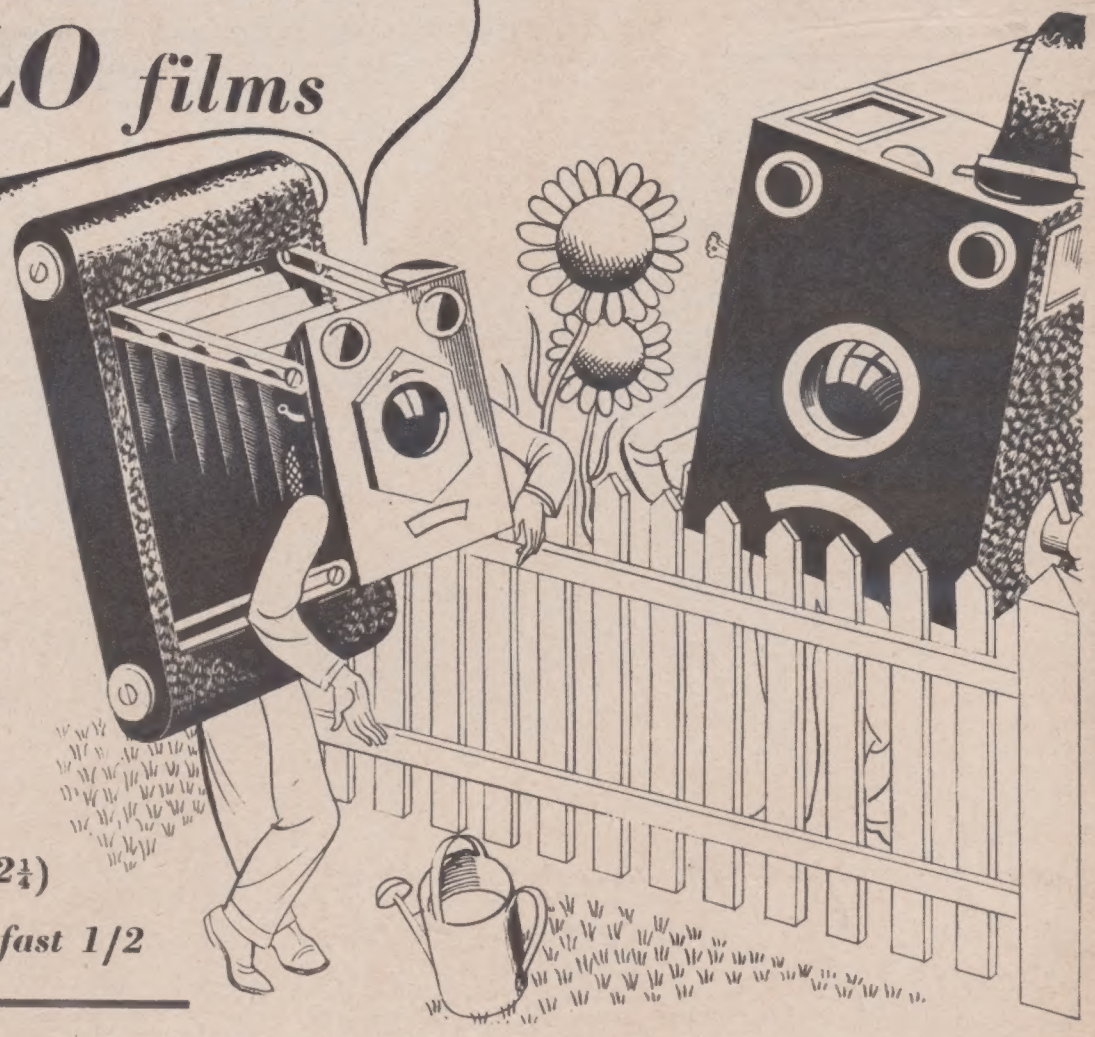

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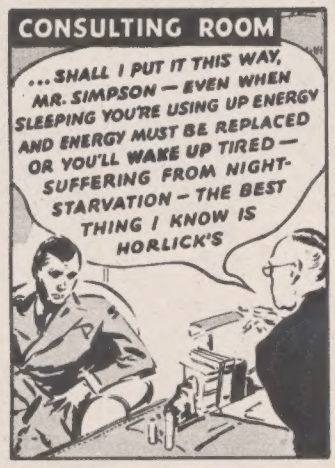

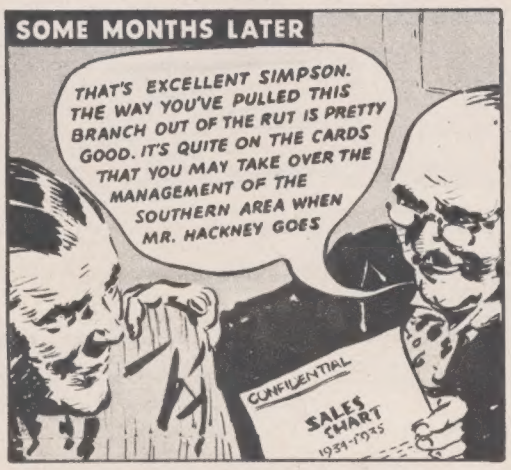

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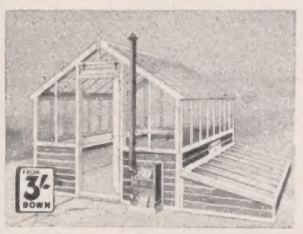

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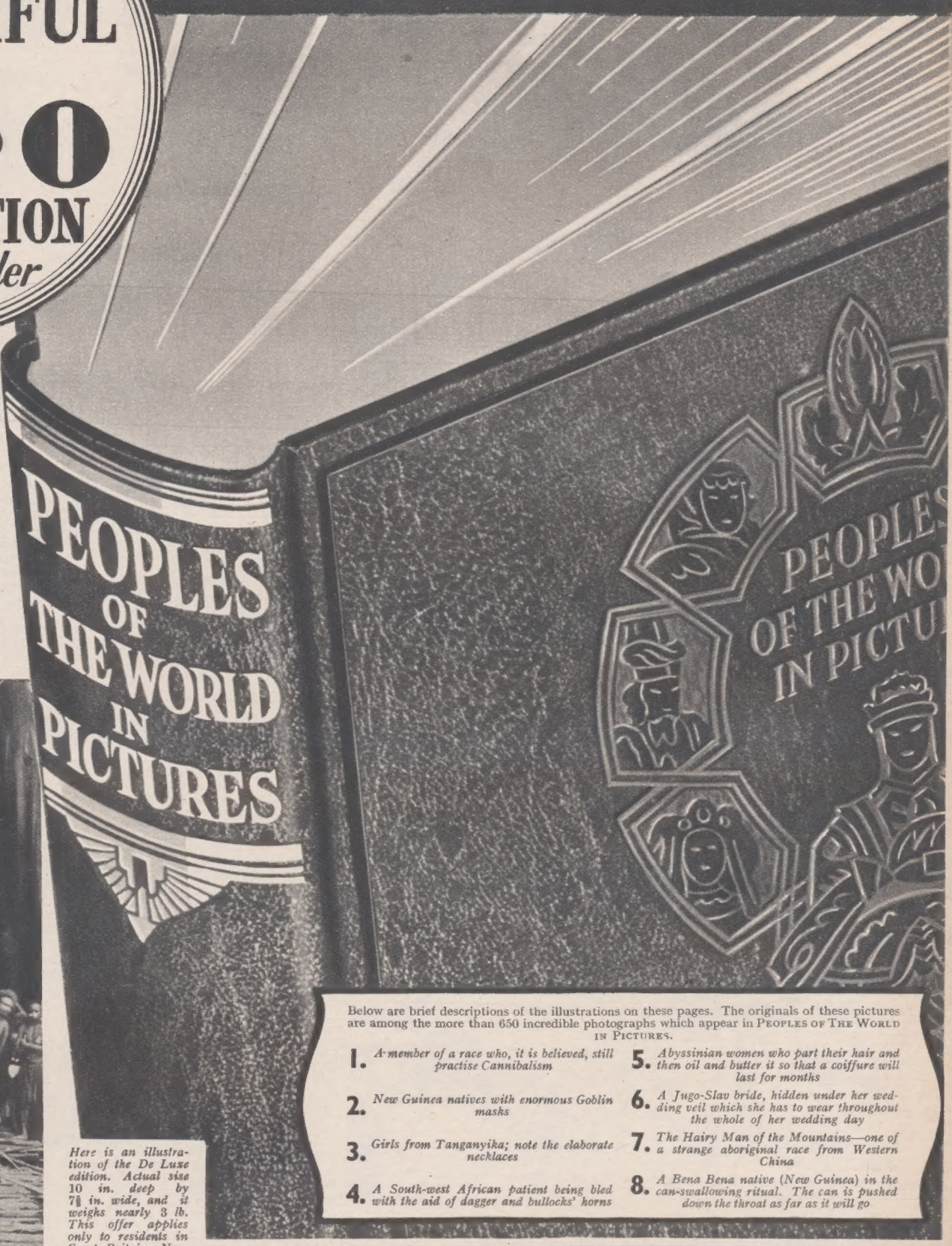

Here is an illustration of the De Luxe edition. Actual size 10 in. deep by 7¾ in. wide, and it weighs nearly 3 lb. This offer applies only to residents in Great Britain, Northern Ireland or Irish Free State. Residents in Irish Free State will be required to pay any charges that may be levied.

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1. *A member of a race who, it is believed, still practise Cannibalism*
2. *New Guinea natives with enormous Goblin masks*
3. *Girls from Tanganyika; note the elaborate necklaces*
4. *A South-west African patient being bled with the aid of dagger and bullocks' horns*
5. *Abyssinian women who part their hair and then oil and butter it so that a coiffure will last for months*
6. *A Jugo-Slav bride, hidden under her wedding veil which she has to wear throughout the whole of her wedding day*
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For Daredevils Only..

The Modern Air Circus, with its daredevil pilots, death-defying acrobats and breath-taking parachutists has all the romance and humour of the old-fashioned circus, even though it lacks the thrills of galloping horses.

by
PAULINE GOWER

NO sooner does a new career fashion itself than it creates numerous variations in its own image; from the time when man first conquered the air and all who took up flying were just "airmen," we now have R.A.F. pilots, test pilots, pilot instructors, sky-writing specialists, Air Line pilots, joyriding pilots and—even Circus pilots.

I am of the latter denomination—the circus or (so-called) joyriding pilot, and this summer my partner, Miss Dorothy Spicer, and I are travelling for the third time with a touring aerial circus.

There is something romantic about the word "circus" for it creates a vision of spangles and gay colours with the smell of sawdust and the sound of cracking whips to the tune of an "allez 'oop." In our modern counterpart (except for the "allez 'oop") we don't share any of this glamour. There's not much romance about flying kit; breeches and shirts or overalls instead of sequined tights and ballet skirts, with the whirr of propellors instead of cracking whips.

We do, however, share one of life's pleasures with our romantic brothers and sisters of the past. We live in a caravan—motor towed, it's true, and with electric light run from the car battery—but then this is 1936, so why not take advantage of the fact?

Each morning for six months we leave bright and early for a new town, while our caravan ambles along the lanes and thoroughfares of Great Britain; we go as "the crow flies" getting there just about five times as fast.

"Joyriding" is the joyrider's description of our business, but not many of them realise the work that lies behind those "flips." Early morning (and some early April mornings are cheerless affairs) sees the engineers busy "vetting" the aeroplanes while pilots study maps and the rest of the staff hurriedly strike camp. We face all manner of bad weather, so that we may arrive in time to settle in to our new camp before the afternoon show begins.

"Walk up—Ladies and Gentlemen—walk up—the show's beginning"—shades of the old fashioned circus! We share with the showman of yesterday

"Day after day we spend in the air, days packed with incident and thrills." Miss Pauline Gower.

that essential understanding of our public, and like him we know that no audience should be kept waiting.

The programme usually begins with a formation flight on which we carry passengers. The flight is really an advertisement and is known to the pilots as a "prop" flight, using "prop" in this case for propaganda. Over the town we go with a great whirring and zooming; a more spectacular and just as effective method of advertisement as the circus posters of the past.

After the grand formation flight, the programme goes on and joyriding begins in earnest.

The "joy" may be the passenger's privilege, but we certainly get our fun as well as our money.

After touring twice with an aerial circus, I might expect to have met every possible variety of passenger, but I feel that I have yet a good many surprises (and not a few laughs) in store.

"Tact" is our watchword. It is not only disconcerting, but also positively alarming to see someone who might be Teddy Brown's twin brother hurrying to fill the remaining seat in your 'plane when your first passenger is already causing the springs to creak.

There's nothing for it but tact—tact and a persuasive tongue. ("Between ourselves the next flight will probably be a smoother one—the wind is changing.")

There is a special technique for dealing with the many old ladies who have a passion for the air.

One dear old Grannie, who went up in my 'plane, had secured her hat by so many motor veils that I couldn't hear a word she said. When finally she did find a corner out of which to speak, she told me—with the authoritative note in her voice that I suspect she used to her grandchildren—that I was not on any account to take her faster than 30 m.p.h. She did not approve of speeding.

Hot Trips

If our costumes as acrobats of the air are unspectacular, those of our passengers are often more bizarre than any clown's pantaloons.

One boiling day, when I was finding the thinnest of shirts almost unbearable, a young man appeared in a leather coat, two sweaters, a muffler, lambswool boots, while he held his 5s. ticket in huge fur-backed gloves.

He spent most of the trip mopping his brow with his handkerchief, but I suppose a Turkish bath would have cost him more.

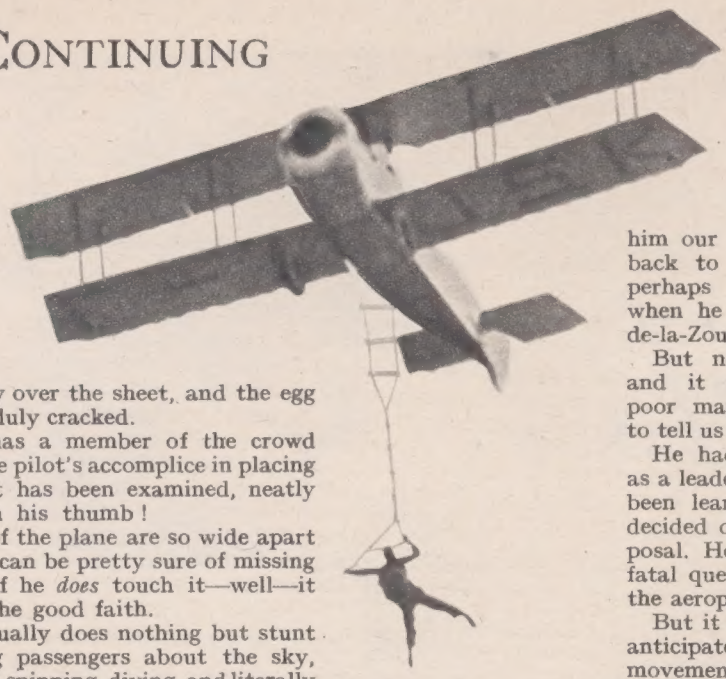
Our prices for joy rides usually run from 3s. 6d., 5s., 7s. 6d., 10s. It is significant that 5s. "hops" are by far the most popular. Few people take advantage of the cheaper fare. I believe they feel that the extra 1s. 6d. spells extra safety. The engine of the aeroplane might drop out at only 3s. 6d.; but they think "five shillings must be so much more stimulating to the pilot, it would be cheaper in the long run!" So 5s. it is.

To return to the programme of events; display flights are going on simultaneously with the joy-rides. Balloon bursting, paper-cutting, bottle-shooting from the air and cracking an egg with the undercarriage of an aeroplane are tricks that prove great favourites with the crowds.

The last of them causes vast astonishment and I am going to break the magician's tradition and tell you how it is done. Spectators are told that the pilot can land with such skilful precision that the wheels will crack, and not break an egg. After being examined by members of the crowd, the egg is placed on the ground and then a white sheet is thrown over it to mark the place. The pilot lands,

(*continued on page* 3)

CONTINUING *For Daredevils Only...*



taxis gracefully over the sheet, and the egg is found to be duly cracked.

Never yet has a member of the crowd guessed that the pilot's accomplice in placing the egg after it has been examined, neatly presses it with his thumb!

The wheels of the plane are so wide apart that the pilot can be pretty sure of missing the egg, and if he *does* touch it—well—it only adds to the good faith.

One pilot usually does nothing but stunt flights, hurling passengers about the sky, rolling, looping, spinning, diving, and literally turning them inside out.

One of the most popular items is the exhibition of crazy flying. The pilot does everything he should not do. He stalls when a few feet from the ground, sweeps along sideways with one wing brushing the grass, makes a bee-line for the petrol wagon and then just as the crowd is holding its breath in anticipation of the crash, pulls back the stick and hops over it.

The most thrilling moment, of course, is the parachute jump. While the aeroplane circles overhead, the crowd gasps as a tiny white figure appears on one wing. For a few moments it is poised . . . and then down it falls, hurtling like a stone for a second, until the snowy canopy billows out and comes floating to the ground with the little pigmy hanging from it.

Last year my parachutist found a friend named Snowdrop, and she came over from Burton to watch him do his jump when we visited Nottingham.

As I was taking him up to do his first drop of the day, I was prepared to have to go to look for him when to my surprise I found him in his kit and hanging about a full half-hour before the jump was scheduled.

He got into the front cock-pit and, while Snowdrop stood by he pretended to be showing her how a safety belt fastened. "What a good idea" I heard her say, bending her head right inside where the crowd could not see.

When Dorothy led her tactfully away before swinging the propeller, he called: "Give me an extra hundred feet to-day, there's a sport."

Everyone likes to be thought a sport, even though she cannot bring herself to go fox-hunting, so I did not tell Snowdrop that an extra hundred feet to a-parachutist is simply a hundred feet more safety.

Happy Landing

At twelve hundred feet I turned into the wind to make a straight course in front of the crowd. My passenger climbed on to the wing and half a minute later he fell from the 'plane.

His parachute had opened some seconds when I banked, bringing him into view. I thought he must have a cord round his neck for he was waving his arms about in a most unprofessional manner, but the parachute was open and all seemed well except that the figure at the end of it was to all appearances suffering from great mental agitation.

His contortions did not last long. In the adjoining field there was a pond covered with slime and weeds to such an extent that the water was barely visible. Into this he went with a muddy splash and as I landed I saw the crowd trying to break through the police barrier to see the rescue.

Poor Snowdrop was standing forlornly by herself.

"Well," I said, "What do you think of your hero?"

"I think he's wet," she replied curtly.

"I expect he is, but you're not blaming me, surely?"

Then she explained that she was not referring to his disappearance in the pond. "I've never seen such an ungainly display of limbs," she concluded.

It was obvious things were not going well for our parachutist during the rest of the day, so when the show was over Dorothy and I offered to lend him our car to drive Snowdrop back to Burton, thinking that perhaps she would feel better when he had shown her Ashby-de-la-Zouch by moonlight.

But nothing could be done, and it was weeks before the poor man recovered sufficiently to tell us the sad story.

He had heard that Snowdrop as a leader of the girl guides, had been learning semaphore, so he decided on a novel form of proposal. He was to semaphore the fatal question when he fell from the aeroplane.

But it was harder than he had anticipated to make the correct movements and Snowdrop's knowledge of signalling was not sufficient to make it possible for her to decipher the message.

So she had told him that she did not doubt his being a parachutist of good descent, but all the same she had decided to let him drop.

Devon and Cornwall seem to be particularly air-minded: Bude, Tiverton, Tavistock—all hold "records" for air-circus "takings." Perhaps nerves, nourished on good Devon and Cornish cream, are not troublesome.

But the good weather of the West Country, nearly always blue skies and sunshine, tempts the most timid to leave the ground whereas a slight wind at another town can play havoc with circus "takings." Few people will willingly "go for a blow" in the air.

I always remember trying to persuade a group of men to buy tickets one rather gusty day when very few passengers were going up. My dog, Wendy, who often accompanies me when I fly, was doing her best to win them over by jumping up on them. She had to be called off.

"Come on," I said, "who's going to take a ticket?"

"What! Us fly?" said one of the men. "No fear! Why, even the blinkin' dog's called 'Windy!'"

North Wales and Scotland—especially Peebles, St. Andrews, and Banff—are always profitable places to visit. Aberdeen does not, of course, respond so readily!

We do extraordinarily well in the poorer industrial districts of Lancashire and Yorkshire, and I believe that the brief flight does really take these men (for our passengers in these places are usually men) out of their drab, uneventful world for a moment. They fly again and again, and I only hope "joy-ride" really does fulfil its name for them.

Many passengers must find it an expensive business, because they come armed with the most alarming and elaborate remedies for "air-sickness."

An elderly women who had been a district nurse in the North of England brought two little "poms" dressed as Scotsmen, when she came for a flight. She said they couldn't be left behind.

She was also carrying a tallow candle. I was mystified, and had vague thoughts of Florence Nightingale in mind when she told me that when she was in the air she was going to eat part of the candle, as she had heard it would prevent her being air-sick.

And she had several small pieces of paper wrapped round stones. On these papers was written: "Nurse X greets you from space." I hope none of the stones greeted anyone on the head.

It is impossible to be responsible for what one's passengers do, or even sometimes for what happens to them.

During some civic festivities in 1932, I took up the then Lord Mayor of Cardiff, and all went well until a sportive breeze removed his bowler hat and deposited it in the sea. I felt definitely answerable for that breeze.

Saxons Didn't Know

Sometimes the perversity of the wind makes the pilot's job extremely difficult. Our landing grounds on these circus tours are on the outskirts of large towns and sometimes, if the wind happens to be coming from the direction of the town, it means taking off over the chimney tops.

All fields have to be licensed by the Air Ministry before they can be used for taking up members of the public, but this does not mean that you can be sure of a good clear take-off whichever way the wind happens to be.

I have flown from many licensed fields that have been quite unworkable except in two directions. That is no reflection on responsible authorities, because the Saxon farmers who planned our fields had no eye to the future. If they were concerned with dragons, they were certainly not of the de Havilland variety.

Circus pilots are out for "safety first" as much out of respect for their own necks as for those of their passengers. It is a common thing to see one or two of the heavier 'planes of an air circus standing idle with their nose-bags on. That means they are off the active list until the wind chooses a more favourable direction for the take-off.

The evening performance starts about 7 p.m. All the items on the programme—air races and crazy flying—are put on again, and in the calm of the summer evening the Great British Public pays its 5s. or more to cool its fevered brow in the rarer upper air.

The pilot's brow may well be fevered by this time, for there is very little rest and often barely time to snatch a cup of tea.

The circus pilot learns to leave his dinner *at* a word, and to eat it cold half an hour later *without* a word. That takes a deal of practice.

Sometimes darkness drops before all those who want to fly have been taken up, and many have to be disappointed. They drift about the field hoping against hope that we shall make an exception and take them for a night flight, but there is no exception to that rule. After dark, the circus closes down.

When the last flight of the day has been made, the aeroplanes are picketed down for the night. Some have their wings folded like great moths and all are made secure against storm.

All this takes time and our day usually encroaches considerably into night, for there is still much to be done before we can yawn "good-night" to each other.

Log books have to be filled in, tickets counted and put in their right order, and the number of passengers carried checked.

Lost property must be collected—and an amazing assortment it turns out to be. Chewing gum and acid drops we take as a matter of course, but I was once a little startled to find a man's toupée in my 'plane. It was never claimed, nor was the hot water bottle, nor the unsigned love poem.

And so we live. Day after day spent in the air, days packed with incident, laughter (annoyances, too) and thrills. Although we enter the details of our days in our log books, each of us maintains the privilege of keeping a private log in the book of memory—and it is amply filled.

Living to the Tune of

"Rhapsody in Red"

"JACK" SQUIRE—the J. H. Squire whose Celeste Octet has been charming radio audiences for thirteen years—ran away from his Devon home to go to sea in a windjammer when he was eleven; before he was thirteen he had lived by blacking boots and playing the cornet in New York streets—and he had killed his first man. And that's just a beginning to a crowded life of adventure.

"I've lived to the tune of some pretty hot music," he says in his life story, the first instalment of which will appear in "Passing Show" next week. If you are thrilled by stories of living dangerously in all the romantic spots of the Seven Seas, read "Jack" Squire's

"Rhapsody in Red" Next Week

Savaran (Number Five) by Douglas Newton

LILY *of* DECEIT

"Savaran!" said the white man, and his teeth flared startingly in his gipsy face when Jadilla, as though stung, snatched his hand away from the spear. The name Savaran had that reaction on most African kinglets from Tangier to Table Bay.

"Zavarani!" cried the Kai, and all his people heard the trouble in his voice. "Why come you to my lands, Zavarani?"

"To hang you, Jadilla, after releasing the white men on whom you have dared to lay your black hands."

Jadilla took a stride forward and with a lightning gesture snatched a throwing iron from the folds of his ape skin. Savaran's wrist—no more—flicked upward as the brawny black arm swung, and the pistol in his hand cracked once. The throwing iron fell half way between the two men and Jadilla,

(*continued on page* 10)

THE drum that is called *engoma*, which is a drum of power, was throbbing upward to the note of death. The tall trees that made solid walls on either side of the jungle glade seemed to concentrate its sullen evil upon the single, brass-bright shaft of sunlight in which the ju-ju man danced.

The brazen shaft let through by careful tree cutting, broadened as the sun mounted. It touched a great bull of a black seated behind the shuffling witch doctor. He was a negro nearly seven feet tall, enormously muscled. He wore the skin of a great ape as helmet and cloak, the fangs of the brute curving down over his low, ugly brow. This was Jadilla, Kai of the Mafattish, a human tiger in cruelty, audacity, cunning and strength. About him stood forty picked braves of his bachelor guard protecting his back which no other man might approach.

Engoma throbbed up and up, its sound pressing all life out of the world. Death stalked very near. The sun splash had spread so that the ground reflected it on to the three victims lashed to sacrificial stakes. When the sun itself touched them they would die . . . or rather, begin to die.

The three victims were white and one was a white woman.

The man to the right of the woman stared straight before him with the queer fixity of a drug addict, and even though his face was blank it had a queer inner stain of evil. The man to her left was a youngster and good-looking with a curiously wholesome charm of good looks. His half-naked body showed bad wounds and he was sagging at his lashings, half-fainting with weakness.

The woman was marvellous, and in a place like that doubly so. She was lovely with a strange, still, pale beauty that made her look a lily of innocence. She looked it now. Even in the face of death she maintained her downcast glance of untouchable and provocative reticence.

The brazen sunray, by some trick of tree cutting, leapt suddenly on to the victims. Abruptly they blazed with light. Abruptly *engoma* leapt to a howling note. Abruptly the ju-ju man sprang forward, his blade whining a shriller note. He sprang at the half-fainting man, his arm swinging to the first of the ritual strokes that would sting the man awake to the long-drawn death the massed blacks were to gloat upon.

As he jumped, something seemed to take him in mid-air and a moment later he was but a twitching mass of limbs and panther tails at the feet of his untouched victims.

The gasping black mob stared horror-held. Jadilla the Kai alone was on his feet bellowing a call to arms. For the first time in his kingship the blood-greedy Mafattish did not obey. A voice wailed:

"Woe! Woe! A god hath struck him dead!"

"Offal-eating dogs," came the rolling voice of the king. "It was a throwing iron, I saw it flash. No god did this——"

"Perhaps you're both right," came a fiercely jeering voice in Swahili, "for I killed him."

There stood behind the Kai, facing twelve hundred spears with a fierce unconcern, a tall and limby white man. He was eagle-faced and bright-eyed. He was also thoroughly enjoying the dramatic effectiveness of himself. A swaggering, extravagant creature, yet something in those bright, strong eyes sent a cold wind into the hearts of the Mafattish.

"Jackal, who art thou?" bellowed Jadilla the Kai and deliberately held his hand to his weapon bearer for a spear.

Jadilla took a stride forward, and snatched a throwing iron from the folds of his ape skin.

Continuing LILY *of* DECEIT

with a yelp, was nursing a useless limb.

Savaran did not move, but at the sound of his shot well-armed *askari* appeared at every angle of the glade. With grim celerity they plumped down machine-guns, fell into place behind them and remained still, watching Savaran.

"People of the Mafattish," he said grimly, "dare you fight Savaran?"

Only a low moan came from the tribesmen and a rattle as the bodyguard dropped shields and spears. Savaran smiled fiercely again and pointed to a great tree over the king's hut. Half a dozen *askari* ran forward with a rope and led Jadilla to the reward of sixteen years of murder.

The white man with the dope-dead face said hoarsely as Savaran freed him from his stake: "Damn you and your play-acting. You cut that almost too fine."

"It wasn't play-acting, Bonny Margnan," said the eagle-fierce man. "I was waiting to see if that ju-ju man went to you first."

Even the deadened face came alive then: "By God," Bonny Margnan gulped. "You would have let him kill me?"

"I believe in all labour-saving devices," said Savaran.

"My God," said Bonny Margnan away, "and you a white man?"

"Charles Templeton and John Gort, to name only two, were white men, Bonny Margnan, but that did not stop you hiring blacks to slaughter them," said Savaran fiercely. "I hold it to be a sanitary act to clean you and your clan off the earth. Also, you double-crossed *me*. Where's your precious father and cousin?"

"Find out for yourself you—you half nigger," snarled Bonny Margnan and fainted, not from the strain, but because he had been deprived of cocaine for weeks.

Savaran stood over the girl who was kneeling with the other man's head in her lap. The boy was quite insensible now and she was bathing his head with water an *askari* had brought. She made an almost too lovely picture of feminine tenderness, and yet Savaran, who always warmed to beauty in women, looked at her with eyes of loathing while his voice had a cutting edge as he spoke.

"Where are your father and your cousin, Lola Margnan?" he asked.

The girl said nothing, just went on bathing young Pendrych's head with a maternal loveliness that only made Savaran angrier. He knew Lola Margnan too well to be taken in by her tableaux.

"I'll have an answer," he said fiercely. "I want to get at the inside of this. I, Savaran, have been tricked as well as this boy. I'm his partner. You're robbing me as well as him. Out with it. What are your father and your reputed cousin up to now? What crooked part do *you* play in the game?"

Lola Margnan, daughter and bait of Max Margnan and his family of swell crooks looked up, her still white beauty even whiter.

"*My* crooked part?" she said.

"What else?" Savaran stormed. "What other could you play? Crooked from birth you have no other instinct. Didn't you lure this boy from me with your calculated charms? Didn't you plan to beat me—ME! Savaran—by getting me arrested at Hamattan? Isn't your whole record a string of such sweet treacheries? Beautiful you are but vile, as Delilah was vile, Lola Margnan. And I know you and mean to have the truth from you."

The girl did not answer, went on bathing the face in her lap. It stirred under her touch.

"Hallo!" said Pendrych in a feeble voice. "Still unsliced am I? Is Lola safe?"

"Safe, Jim," she said in her lovely lying voice.

"Thank God," the boy breathed. "Give me your hand to kiss, darling."

"Pendrych," snapped the eagle-faced man.

"Savaran!" cried the boy with limp gladness. "It's old Savaran. I guessed he'd do the trick. It's his way—great lad, Savaran, has the grand *flair*. Said as much to Lola the day these black brutes snaffled us. Said: 'Keep your pecker up, dearest, I've a hunch that Savaran is in this. Rescuing us is just the sort of miracle he does by habit.' I felt that in my bones, didn't I, Lol?"

"Lol!" snorted Savaran glaring hate at the girl.

"Lol," murmured the wounded boy. "Lol here. Lola Margnan that was—my wife Lol!"

He grinned in shaky rapture, drew the girl's hand to his lips and blissfully fainted. And Savaran, for once in his life, thoroughly at loss, lifted his eyes from the clean-run youngster who had won his heart, to glare at the harpy whose beauty was a synonym for rank evil throughout Africa.

Lola Margnan said nothing, showed nothing. No man ever did know what went on in her still soul. But this Savaran did know—her marriage to Jim Pendrych was monstrous.

Savaran was that form of living craziness known as a genius; that is, one never knew how his mind would jump.

Jim Pendrych was a whim. To the naked felonious eye he was merely a prize pigeon born for plucking, yet Savaran loved the boy and was ready to wreck nations to protect him.

Naturally Jim Pendrych offered several excuses for this. He was, for one, as candid, trusting and fine-minded as any young thoroughbred could be. For another, he frankly worshipped the eagle-fierce adventurer. These things helped to affection, no doubt, but they did not quite explain, for Jim Pendrych represented loot to the tune of eight hundred thousand pounds English, and, in the main, hard cash counted more with Savaran than mere passing human emotions.

Jim Pendrych came to the Swamp Coast to win a fortune out of a mine and so restore the glories of an ancient and aristocratic family. He was the ten million and tenth youth to hit Africa with the same idea. Nevertheless his case had a unique touch. There was really gold in his gold mine.

It was an odd story. The mine had belonged to Jim's uncle who had bought and worked it before the World War. It had proved a first-class proposition in those days with but one defect—the Mafattish. Even then the Mafattish had been a rogue people, a living danger to all neighbours, white and black. Not a big tribe, they made the most of their jungle fastness, their genius in jungle war, and above all the fact that they straddled the only available caravan route to Port Hamattan.

Because of them Jim's uncle had made no attempt to get his gold along that road to shipboard. He had just let it accumulate in ingots until he had a fortune as big as he wanted, and which he could move in one well-protected caravan. His plan was sound, for he meant to hire a white regiment from the Swamp Coast and so defy the Mafattish.

He had collected £800,000 in ingots and was ready to put his plan into operation when the World War spoilt it.

That £800,000 now belonged to Jim Pendrych. His uncle had been killed on the Ypres front and Jim had become heir to all the Pendrych mortgages, the mine and its secret. During Jim's minority his lawyers had made discreet inquiries about this property, only to learn that Jadilla was still rampant and the district more lethal for whites than ever.

They advised Jim when he came of age that merely to think about the mine was sheer waste of tissue and that he had better find a job selling motors. Jim grinned, he usually did, managed to whack up another mortgage and with it paid his expenses to Hamattan.

The first forty-five white residents of that tropics pest hole he consulted made it plain that only those men who preferred their suicides lingering ever ventured into the Mafattish bush. Jim did not consult the remaining thirty-seven whites. Before he came to them he'd had word that Savaran was in Hamattan.

He'd heard many tales about this rococo soldier of fortune—who in Africa had not?—and he felt at once that this African Robin Hood with an Alexander the Great complex was just the merchant to help him. Therefore, by means of palm-oil and stealth, he found his way to that dark and greasy house in Hamattan's cut-throat quarter where Savaran, under the name of Von Moltke, lurked. Savaran had natural causes for modesty of address. Not only was he reduced to one suit of clothes and eleven borrowed dollars, but there were five warrants out for his arrest in Hamattan.

"Gil is dead," said Lola tonelessly.

Illustrated by A. C. Michael

Jim Pendrych knew all this, too, but it only seemed to make him like Savaran the more. It lent the dark and limby adventurer a glamour that led him to spill the whole of his story with a candour that made even Savaran cry:

"Shut up, you young madman. Don't you realise that this town is filled with rascals all ready to promise you safe escort to the mother lode of hell merely to rob you of that letter of credit you're flourishing under my nose?"

"Oh, quite," grinned Jim Pendrych, "but—you're Savaran."

"Damn the boy," roared the spidery man, "he's going to make me love him."

It had probably already happened. Savaran, swift in all things, love, war and hate, had already become Jim Pendrych's father, mother and dry nurse before the boy even spoke of partnership, for when Jim talked airily of a fifty-fifty split on any find, Savaran cried with a flash of white teeth:

"You don't seem to realise that having let the cat out of the bag to Savaran, that £800,000 is no longer yours to offer. But for some odd reason not unconnected with your pink cheerfulness, I'm going to be a darn fool and take an eighth share only."

Possibly Savaran found a heady satisfaction in demonstrating his power to create armies and dominate natives in front of a disciple so quick to admire, but the mere company of a lad so trusting, loyal and generous was warming enough. And it is also a definite fact that the strange, harsh fellow did shield Jim from all the filth, the vileness and the treachery that African ports abound in—until the Margnans came.

Savaran was not to blame for the Margnans. The expedition was practically ready and its plan discussed and decided on, when the *dhow* smuggling their ammunition had to dodge a Swamp Coast gunboat. This not only meant a delay of ten days, but Savaran had to leave Jim in Hamattan and go to the coast to make sure of the landing of their arms. During those ten days the Margnans came, saw Jim, and Lola conquered.

Why Max Margnan brought his gang to such a swelter spot as Hamattan only the suave sly brain of Max Margnan could tell. Maybe he had heard whispers of Jim Pendrych's venture, for Max had spies everywhere as well as an uncanny nose for loot. Anyhow, they came, took the millionaire's suite in Jim's hotel, comported themselves, as they always did, that is as super-gilt globe-trotters and loosed the destructive loveliness of Lola at the boy's impressionable heart.

It was their usual line of attack, for the Margnans were wolves *de luxe*, as score upon score of dupes and the baffled police posts of all Africa knew to their cost. Old Max supplied the deep brain-work of the family—if it was one family—that enabled it to rob, nine times out of ten, inside the law. Bonny Margnan, who probably was Max's son, for he had breeding, gave to the gang that extra spurt of drug brilliance or brutishness that often meant the winning of a difficult coup. Gil Margnan, who was supposed to be a cousin, had all the crude ferocity of the Bowery and was supreme in a rough house. And Lola—Lola was the unfailing bait.

Lola made short work of most of her dupes, she made even shorter of so innocent a proposition as Jim Pendrych. In a single day he was swept off his feet and before many days were out the skill of Max had wormed from him the whole meaning and plan of his venture, including the easy way round the Mafattish by the Panna Pass, though Jim himself would have been startled to learn how much he had blabbed.

Max Margnan knew at once that he was on big money that could be lifted easily and without great risk. It was a temptation that Max would have scorned to resist. He, therefore, made plans that were, in their way, quite as brilliant as Savaran's.

The lean adventurer only heard about the Margnans when he arrived back in Hamattan to tell Jim that they would march the next day. It was morning then and as daylight was no time for Savaran to walk about a city infested with warrants, he merely swore luridly and promised to deal fiercely and finally with the Margnans when he met Jim that night.

Unfortunately, Max Margnan was a man of quick action, too. Hearing from a spy that Savaran was back, he lit a fat cigar and strolled in his elegant way to the Police Commissionaire. Here certain bills of high denomination passed and as a result ten horny-handed *millah* police fell in a mass on Savaran as he left his house to call on Jim.

Savaran guessed most of the Margnan plot, but only learnt the working details four days after they had set out with Jim Pendrych for the mine. There was a certain excuse for this delay. Records had it that no man ever had or ever could escape from the particular cell in Hamattan's *morro* in which Savaran had been chained.

Savaran gathered his facts as a friendly brass-worker cut the chain rings off his limbs, and as he listened his eagle face took on that genial savagery that meant death for someone.

He heard that Jim had been thoroughly upset by his partner's mysterious disappearance and ready to beat up the whole Swamp Coast territory to find him. The boy had refused to believe Max Margnan's urbane suggestion that Savaran had merely been true to form and had bolted, as usual, after securing all the cash possible from his victim.

In fact, so loyal had Jim been that Max had had to bribe natives to act as debt collectors for Khalid Ali, the Imam Gablan, and the rest, to convince him that Savaran had not paid a penny of the £4,000 handed to him for expedition expenses, but had gone off with the lot on the very *dhow* that was supposed to be bringing the ammunition.

When he heard that, Savaran, who had paid every bill with the scrupulousness of a bank manager, swore so complete and terrible a vengeance on the whole Margnan clan that the brass-worker got under his counter and awaited death, dagger in hand.

In the end Jim's desperate position persuaded him against his convictions. Not only had Savaran, it seemed, smashed his chance of reaching his mine, but he had left him penniless to face big bills for men and munitions.

It was a crushing blow, but it was here, naturally, that Max Margnan played the splendid little gentleman. He came at once to Jim's rescue. His noble soul was outraged at such a dirty trick played on such a splendid young fellow. He put all his wealth and his experience at Jim's disposal. He and his family would join the expedition for the sheer sport of the thing.

No, he wanted no reward, not he—still, if Jim insisted, perhaps one of the ingots suitably engraved as a memento of the adventure would serve. Max Margnan was, in fact, superbly generous—as he could afford to be since the expedition was already paid for and he had Savaran's plan of campaign to work to. And where Max Margnan's generosity might have seemed suspicious, the deadly charm of Lola covered it up. That £800,000 was going to be the biggest and easiest steal in the gang's history.

Savaran heard all, stood up unfettered and said with the grin of a panther :

"In a month these Margnans join the legends—they'll be a legend told with shudders of what Savaran did to those who wronged him in the eyes of a boy."

"But you cannot catch them," said the brass-worker. "They have too much start."

"What are four days to Savaran?" flashed the lean man. "Go thou now to Kalid Ali and the Imam Galban and say that at noon to-morrow Savaran will be at the Saint's tomb by the Mafattish trail; there he expects to find two hundred men, with stores, ammunition, and five machine-guns for his march on the Mafattish. And that if they are not there Savaran will want to know the reason why."

Savaran drove his two hundred forward by marches that shocked them. They were a bad-hat lot and on the third day they gathered into a sullen mob to decide how best and quickest to kill this driver of slaves.

Savaran went straight among them and when a murderous Sudan negro put a rifle to his chest, he lifted the muzzle, squinted down it with calm ferocity and told the spellbound brute that he and his weapon were so foul that if he did not clean both at once he, Savaran, would call at the next village and get the "mammies" there to give him a public bath.

Savaran knew the value of a gesture. His cold audacity intimidated his men, his savage humour tickled them. They fell back from his steel-wire figure and listened to his talk, and Savaran talked like a ju-ju man spurring braves to frenzy. When he had finished they had forgotten that they had objected to marching and suggested that they should do an extra trek that night.

Marching them like machines, welding them into a fighting mass that would respond to his slightest gesture, Savaran carried his two hundred to the point where Margnan and his party had left the main trail and Jim and his handful had been overwhelmed by the Mafattish.

"Listen, brothers," said Savaran grimly. "There is the voice of *engoma* speaking beyond the miles. To-morrow at dawn there will be blood rites in the big Mafattish palaver place. It is then we will fall upon them, for they will be too bemused with the wickedness before their eyes to fight. Is it not good?"

It was good. These *askari* that Savaran had made out of coastal riff-raff, felt the lean man's genius as a dog feels a friend or an enemy through its senses. They followed and obeyed. In the jungle mists of morning they moved unseen into position round the village and so the Mafattish fell to but a single shot through Jadilla's arm and the iron glance of a born conqueror.

But Savaran, though the spirit in him demanded it, could not king it over the Mafattish. He had too few men, as the jungle brutes would see when they awoke from their bemusement. Moreover, he was here to save Jim Pendrych's gold and to exact payment from the Margnans. He was also anxious about the Margnans. Max Margnan and Gil had not left the others behind without reason. There was some sly trick in the air that had to be countered.

It was best countered by pressing on to Jim Pendrych's mine. That called for all his forces, too. Max Margnan had a strong band with him —Savaran knew that, for he had hired it—and if it came to a fight it would need all Savaran's generalship and every rifle to win. So he moved swiftly, though Jim Pendrych, blank-minded and helpless from wounds and fever, had to be carried in a litter Bonny Margnan had to be carried, too, but only for a day; after that he died from lack of cocaine, evil living and local privations.

He had not talked. Jim could not. Lola only answered as her still and secret mind permitted. Savaran found himself at sea. He could not even begin to get a line on Max's sly plot, though his knowledge of these crooks made it plain it must be something ugly.

There was the business of the marriage, for instance. A rushed affair. Lola told him it had happened on the day they left Hamattan, at the British consulate. Jim had wanted it as none knew the dangers that lay ahead.

"But Max Margnan prompted it, of course," said Savaran.

"Yes," the girl admitted.

"It wasn't legal, of course," he snapped.

(*continued on page* 12)

Kay Stammers finds horse-riding a "rest" after tennis, while—

TENNIS STARS *Can't Go Gay*

says Fred Perry

IF a tennis star is seen at any of the "night spots" during a major tournament —even though he might only stay for a few minutes—tongues start wagging and before he realises it, he is becoming dissipated!

If he loses a match the next day—oh *la la*! All the world knows that he is thinking more of having a good time than of his tennis.

Such is the burden of a good tennis star. Little do the "wise-acres" realise that it is impossible to keep at top pace all the time—especially if you are matched against the best players in the world.

As an instance of this I recall that strenuous tournament at Newport Casino during the summer of 1931. Pat Hughes and I were making a "two-man tour" of the States. We started in Rye, New York, where I won the tournament after beating three of their "first ten" players. Then came Newport. In the first round I just managed to beat a man who was not really supposed to cause me alarm. He was Teddy Burwell, and since then he has been consistently winning tournaments in England.

After that battle I survived the second round only to find I had to meet Allison in the third round. Then came George Lott, who was followed by Sidney Wood in the semi-final. And to cap all this, I played Vines in the final on the Saturday.

If to such a season of concentrated play as this there should be added a trip to the Antipodes, calling for matches against such players as Crawford, McGrath and Quist at regular intervals, it means that you have to be playing really first-class tennis all the year round.

There will be little opportunity to relax, but if you should happen to go out to attempt to enjoy an evening, then, of course, you are "not attending to business."

So, although these tours may be looked on as the "plums" of the season's activities, they are extremely strenuous, for you have not only to be fit and keen, but also you must steer clear of anything that might jeopardise your chances.

If you are to be in the pink of condition, there can be no all-night parties, no numerous tankards of the "local brew" and no sightseeing when you should be practising.

You have to do as well, if not better, on tour than you do at home. People expect it, and that causes more trouble.

On all these tours, the visiting team is entertained by the local clubs at parties, lunches, afternoon tea parties, and dinners. Then all the theatres and "movies" are thrown open to you.

It is not possible to play good tennis and accept all the invitations, but it is most difficult to refuse any of them without causing ill-feeling.

All these "fancy" dinners (as I always call them) do not do any good. You not only have to sit up late listening to speeches, but also you do not have a chance to escape the atmosphere of the game. There is no change.

Personally, I do not like such dinners. When there is any serious tennis in the offing, plain foods are my choice, with a good lapse of time between each meal.

Usually, I go to the local cinemas in the evening. This keeps me from "stewing" over the matches. Also there is less danger of getting that party spirit, which is so easy to acquire on those trips abroad. It's much safer in the movies if you want to play serious tennis yet get some much-needed relaxation.

These strenuous tours sap all the strength from your bones, making you feel that you don't care if you never play tennis again. It is one thing to play men from South Africa, America or Australia in England—but it is another matter to tackle these players in their own "backyards" where the mercury rises to about 100. They think nothing of it.

Three months of intense heat and fierce sunshine play havoc with your stamina. Food has to be adjusted accordingly, and that may upset your tummy.

If you do not feel well, it is impossible to do yourself justice on a tennis court, and if you are unable to play, the whole team is thrown out of gear.

Alterations may affect the success of the trip from a financial point of view, and should the tour be a "flop," you don't get invited again.

Still, even though these tours are such really hard work, anyone selected for one of them is envied by all the players he leaves behind, for in addition to the most strenuous there are minor programmes that are really worth while.

They offer all the thrills of the longer tours, the same number of parties, all of which you can enjoy without running the risk of losing matches. Only players who have lived through the strenuous days of the big tours are entitled to the pleasures of the lesser.

There is ample opportunity for practice while on tours such as these, because the matches offer ample scope for trying out different shots.

It is not necessary to "fool about"; it can be done quite simply in the ordinary course of the game, without anyone being any the wiser. Should you be unlucky enough to get into difficulties in such conditions, you will always have enough in reserve to get out of danger.

It is possible to learn a great deal in this way, though the best way really to improve is to be fortunate enough to be on a trip that embraces both easy and difficult matches.

In this way, any shots you learn while touring in, say, the United States can be practised in New Zealand, and (if you are lucky) used later in Australia.

During the last five years, I have had my fill of both kinds of tours. Among those that called for little or no hard tennis have been trips to Brazil, Chile, the West Indies, Canada, and New Zealand, where I had most fun and relaxation.

—Fred Perry tries golf

Eighteen months ago I stayed there for two weeks for the New Zealand championships. Officially I was "resting" from the game. I played a round of golf each morning and a tennis match in the afternoon. Also, I managed plenty of the late nights, yet survived to win the championship.

Eventually I arrived at Honolulu, where tennis officials dragged me off the ship and gave me the most amazing time. There can be no question about Honolulu being the home of "garden party" lawn tennis.

At last I found my way to California, to be met there by the officials who were in charge of all tournaments on the West Coast. They soon proved to me that there is a big difference between playing seriously and playing casually against people who are not quite able to overthrow you.

Still, I am convinced that I would never have been able to go through the whole of last season had I not devoted those months to playing tennis of a rather more gentle nature than usual.

A tour that will always be remembered was to Jamaica and Bermuda in 1932. In the team were Betty Nuthall, Mrs. Whittingstall, Lester, Hughes, Lee, and myself. For six weeks we defied the training laws, yet still managed to win all our matches.

Swimming (supposed to be bad for the eyes) was the chief pastime of the day, and we had many a midnight bathe, too. This would not have been possible had we been playing in the States, or in South Africa or in Australia, but as it was, the English cricketers were with us, and so was the Navy. Anyone can imagine what that meant.

When there were no parties for us, we just went along to one for the cricketers or the Navy. And that lasted for six weeks.

Even so, there was no excessive party spirit, for we were always keen to produce reasonably good form. We enjoyed ourselves thoroughly, but were still able to play tennis that left both opponents and spectators well satisfied with our visit.

Actually, things were not quite so easy in Bermuda, because some of the better American players were there, and this meant there was the usual worry as to whether we would be able to beat our opponents.

Only last August I made my first trip to Canada. As well as giving me a much-needed rest from the "big stuff," I had a chance to recover from the strain of the Davis Cup. But my "rest" was not nearly long enough.

This big championship tennis is all very well, but it is not possible to keep it up indefinitely. There must be time for relaxation. Those who keep it up year after year must rest during the minor tours and short interludes between big tours.

The higher up the ladder you are, the greater the strain on nerves and stamina. If you can weather the hard matches of a home season and gain a place in a touring team, all the effort will be well worth while.

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SHORT SHORT STORY

by Chapin Howard

The Ticket

Just inside the threshold she paused.

IT was a mystery—the way the theatre ticket had come to her. It had just been slipped into a typewritten envelope, addressed to "*Mrs. Effie Mardles*, 111 *Vine St., London, S.W.*15"; and there had been no name or message on the blank sheet of paper. Such a thing had never happened to her before in her whole life.

Of course she went two or three afternoons a week to see the picture at the Ideal, in the street next her home, and usually she stopped afterwards at the corner café for a marshmallow sundae. But here she was this Saturday in the fourth row of the orchestra stalls at a matinée of "Young Love"—the play that was one of the hits of the season; and still she didn't know the name of the person who had paid the twelve-and-six for her seat.

She had not told Hattie a word about the adventure. Luckily her long coat hid the fact that she was wearing her new blue taffeta when she left home, and she had waited until she got to the ladies' room at the theatre before adding her rouge and lipstick and pinning on the roses she had bought on the way. Then she had got her rings and bracelet from her bag, and changed to her clean pair of white gloves; and just as the curtain was going up she had made an effective, stately entrance.

It had all been carefully thought out.

For last night, lying awake in her stuffy little bedroom, Mrs. Mardles had suddenly hit upon an explanation of why the ticket had been sent to her anonymously. It was a romantic explanation, of the sort Hattie would laugh at. But Hattie, as her plain sister, had always been jealous of her, and never lost an opportunity of reminding her now that she was stout, forty-four and the mother of Mildred.

In short, the explanation Mrs. Effie Mardles had evolved for herself while staring at the midnight ceiling was that the ticket had been sent to her by the man who had picked up her glove that day in the café. She had seen at the time that he was attracted. Now she was sure of it. But he had been tactful enough to devise a way of meeting her that would not arouse neighbourhood gossip. The fact that the aisle seat next her own was vacant this afternoon entrenched her firmly in her belief.

However, in no time at all, the first act was over and the seat beside her remained vacant. He would probably slip into it during the interval. She had planned a lot of interesting things she meant to say this afternoon—when he came. Just a few things about herself. It would be such a relief to have someone to talk to, some one who was understanding, *simpático*—a man friend! She had never had one. But she could visualise him perfectly as she sat here alone. He would be tall, grave, distinguished, one silver lock in his raven hair. Just like the man in the café.

She wondered how she had been lucky enough to meet her ideal. Nowadays, with Hattie's sharp eyes to keep watch, and Hattie's sharp tongue to comment, her life was that of a prisoner under guard. And before that she had had no real life of her own, because there had been her little girl to think of. She had made a slave of herself for Mildred.

How many mothers could have brought up a child on such inadequate alimony? Month after month Edward had been behind with his payments, and she had walked the floor, knowing that he didn't mind giving her that racking anxiety. Then finally he had got pneumonia, and died—on purpose, it seemed, because he realised widowhood would be more difficult for her.

But fortunately by that time Mildred had been old enough to get a job in an office, and Hattie had come to live with them and contribute her tiny income. They had all managed, somehow, in a smaller flat, in a terrible neighbourhood and without even a charwoman to come in to do the cleaning.

Then for a while last year—as if she didn't have enough to bear, anyway—Mildred had taken into her head the notion of getting married and setting up a home of her own. Of course, such a thing was not to be thought of. Not for years and years, anyway, until the girl had met a man who was older, who would be a help to the family as a son-in-law. Wasn't she still Mildred's mother? She had put her foot down, refused to listen to any argument. She knew what early marriages were. She had married at seventeen herself, and didn't her life-experience prove the folly of that? They needn't try to talk her over.

But at the thought of herself eventually sitting by the window of a suburban guest-room, unwanted, neglected, *a mother-in-law*, Effie Mardles's tears crept down her cheeks! She, who could have been the centre of a brilliant throng, whom men had thought up fantastic ways of meeting for a rendezvous! She was convinced that the tall dark man would have been here beside her right now except that at the last minute he had probably been detained at the office.

She dabbed at her eyes and glanced toward the stage. The play was still going on. But having missed the first two acts, there wasn't much sense in trying to understand what was happening in the third. Besides, no one knew she had come to the matinée. So she wouldn't have to talk about it afterwards.

Her hand on the chair-arm was small and white, with dimples. She could imagine a baritone voice murmuring: "Everything about you is dainty, exquisite. I want this little hand always to keep its pampered look!" Pampered! She had had a harder life than any other woman she knew. Hers was the tragedy of being cheated out of everything she had a right to.

A young, sheltered "home girl," she had married the wrong man just because he was the first who had asked her. But her fate had been to marry Edward; and Edward had turned out to be nothing at all. Well, as it turned out, she might better have let Hattie keep him—Hattie had wanted him badly enough!

The sudden outburst of applause around her was startling. Surely the play couldn't be over—there must be another act! She groped for her programme. But no—the curtain was going up and down; the actors were taking their bows strung out in a line across the stage; people were getting into their wraps.

She pulled on her black velvet hat and winked back her tears while she bravely readjusted the roses on the lapel of her coat. The afternoon was ending, as so many other afternoons had ended for her, with a flat return to reality. She would have to walk through the foyer alone, when she had expected to have a tall, distinguished man at her side, bending on her a pleading glance. "When can I—when *may* I see you again?"

In the Underground, looking about her discontentedly, she spied a woman wearing a scarf of grey fur. Staring at it through the last of her tears, it occurred to her that she would get one of her own just like it. She had to make up to herself in some way for her disappointment. It was her habit to give herself little treats, little presents, when life became unendurable. And she had a secret fund for this purpose. It was five hundred pounds Edward's father had left her—surprisingly—for Mildred's education. But Mildred had been earning her own money by that time, so there had been no need to say anything about the legacy. More than half of it was still left.

Hurrying home now through the twilight, Mrs. Mardles promised herself a silver fox scarf "as a present." She would take a month, perhaps, to select it, to get exactly what she wanted. That would mean going in to town every week by herself and having little lunches. It would be a real amusement for her lonely autumn; and then, when she had finally made up her mind, she still needn't tell Hattie and Mildred how much she paid for it.

As she turned in at her own doorway, she thought a woman lingering in the hall looked at her queerly. But she brushed past to the stairs and climbed the two flights, remembering to drop her rings and bracelet into her bag before fishing out her latchkey. Hattie would be in the kitchen getting dinner. She could slip through to her bedroom and wash off her make-up.

But just inside the threshold she paused. There was a bouquet of white roses on the hall table. Through the arch she could see more white roses on the mantelpiece, and garlands of smilax looped to the chandelier. Something on the floor crunched under her slippers as she took a step back.

Hattie, with her hair frizzed and with an apron tied over her best brown silk dress, was sweeping the rug. She glanced around. Her eyes were sharp and bright as a bird's. "Well, did you enjoy your matinée?" she asked. "I haven't had time to sweep up the rice yet, but I suppose you can see we've been having a wedding. Mildred was married this afternoon from her own home—as every girl has a right to be. She and Fred have gone off on their honeymoon. So it's all over now, but your hysterics."

Effie Mardles, swaying there on her high heels, clutched the portière with one gloved hand. The other hand she pressed against her heart. She knew at last who had sent her the ticket. Hattie was the most cruel woman God ever created!

"Mildred?" she gasped. "My little Mildred?"

The GIRL from Nowhere

Continuing

Stowaway to Mars

by John Beynon

READ THIS FIRST Dale Curtance, six feet, broad-shouldered, a daredevil aviator, already the idol of Britain, finds a new excitement for a world that has exhausted the thrills of perfect television, of rocket-plane racing, and of flying small aircraft that land in back gardens. For the shooting of a spy in the Curtance Hangar, where the world's most sensational planes have been produced since Dale's father designed the Flying Flivver, reveals a space-ship, *Gloria Mundi*, in which Curtance plans to travel to Mars and back to win a million pound prize offered by Keuntz, an American rival, to the first man to complete an inter-stellar journey. Despite the scheming of Keuntz and the opposition of Mary Curtance, who has just presented Dale with an heir, this daring aviator and his crew—James Burns, engineer, Doctor Grayson, Froud, journalist, and Geoffrey Dugan—go aboard *Gloria Mundi*, while millions of people watch their television screens to see her leave Salisbury Plain. Seconds pass . . . then with a zoom like thunder, *Gloria Mundi*, fire bursting from every port, is flung into space.

NOW READ ON

DOCTOR GRAYSON'S eyes were tightly shut. The lids were pressed desperately together as though the slender membranes could cut him off from all sensation. Dugan's were open, and his head was turned slightly to one side as he watched Dale. The control-lever and the hand upon it were hidden from him, but he could see the right arm stiffen as Dale's fingers gripped.

There was a sudden roar, loud and terrifying in spite of the evacuated double walls. An invisible weight pressed him deep into the cushions of his couch. The shuddering of the rocket shook him all over, despite the intervening springs, with a vibration which seemed to be shaking him to pieces. His head was swimming, and his brains felt like lead in his skull.

A new high note, a penetrating shriek, soared above the roar as the atmosphere fled screaming past outside. With an effort he managed to turn his head and look at the thermometer suspended above Dale. The temperature of the outer hull was rising already, and the speed indicator was only yet moving past the mile a second mark—three thousand, six hundred miles an hour—Dugan was swept by a sudden panic—did Dale know?

Dale's eyes were fixed on the large disc which bore only a single second-hand. Slowly, and in accordance with the planned acceleration of a hundred feet per second, he was turning the control lever. And slowly the speed indicator was advancing. Intangible force continued to press on the men. It became difficult to breathe. The fine springs and soft down felt like cast iron: compressed internal organs ached intolerably; hearts laboured; veins rose in cords. Heads burned and drummed: eyes no longer seemed to fit their sockets.

The whine of the air passed beyond hearing; the thermometer continued to rise, but it was still far below the red danger-mark. The speed indicator slid forward—three and a half—four—four and a half miles a second—four minutes since the start. . . A little behind schedule. . . .

Dugan ceased to watch. He could no longer see clearly. His eyes felt as though they must burst. Like a refrain in his mind went the repetition: "Seven miles a second. . . . Seven miles a second. . . ." Less than that would mean failure to get free from Earth.

The pressure grew. Dale was increasing the acceleration beyond the hundred feet. The weight ground down on the men, crushing them with an intolerable agony, straining ribs as though to crack them. . . . At last Dugan slipped into unconsciousness. . . .

◆ ◆ ◆

Dugan, the youngest and the strongest, was the first to open his eyes. He was immediately and violently sick. Before he had completely recovered the others were beginning to stir and to show similar symptoms. His first anxiety when he gained a little control of himself was the speed indicator, and he sighed with relief to see that it was registering a trifle above seven miles a second—actually a point or two beneath seven might not have failed to tear them free from Earth's attraction, but the safety-margin would have been unpleasantly narrow. He turned over on his side to look at Dale who had begun to move slightly. How the man had held out against the pressure to accelerate to such a point was a mystery. Somebody, Dugan decided, would have to invent an automatic acceleration control.

He sat up with great caution and released his straps. The rocket tubes were shut off now, and the ship travelling under her own momentum, so there would be no appreciable pull of gravity. He unfastened a pair of magnetic-soled shoes from their holders beside his couch and strapped them on before lowering his feet to the floor.

Burns was less circumspect. He undid his buckles, sat up abruptly and met the ceiling with a smack. He swore.

"Why don't you use your brains?" the doctor grumbled, peevishly. He was feeling extremely unwell and remained quite unamused by the spectacle of Dugan dragging the engineer back to his couch.

"I didn't think we were going to hit the no-gravity zone so soon," Burns explained. The doctor shook his head.

"There's no such thing as no gravity," he told him severely.

"Is there not, now? Well, it feels as if there is, blast it," said the other ungratefully.

"Don't let Doc bother you," advised Froud, pausing in the act of reaching for his shoes. "You were quite in the best tradition. Wells's and Verne's people bified about just like that. I say, can't we open one of those shutters?"

Dugan looked at the still horizontal Dale.

"Better wait for orders."

"That's all right." Dale's voice came weakly. "Go ahead—if the windows aren't broken. I'll lie here a bit."

The three began to tackle one of the shutters while the doctor searched in his case for a syringe before moving over to Dale. There was some difficulty in unscrewing the shutters. With no weight in their bodies to act as leverage every movement required purchase in the opposite direction, but at length the shutter was made to swing back.

Stars like diamonds, bright and undiffused, shone in brilliant myriads against a velvet blackness. Bright sparks which were great suns burnt lonely, with nothing to illuminate in a darkness they could not dissipate. In the empty depths of space there was no size, no scale, nothing to show that a million light years was not arm's length, or arm's length a million light years. Microcosm was confused with macrocosm.

For a short time no one spoke, then:

"Where's the Earth?" Froud asked.

"She'll rise soon. We're twisting slightly," Dugan told him.

They waited while the flaring stars slipped slowly sideways. A dark segment began to encroach, blotting everything else from sight. It swung farther and farther across their sky until upon its far edge, seemingly above them, gleamed the crescent Earth. Froud murmured half to himself:

"Isn't she a beauty? Shimmering like a pearl."

The vast crescent had not the hard, clear outline of the moon. A cool, green-blue light flooded out from it as it hung huge and lucent in the sky, softened as though by a powdering of some celestial bloom.

Sunset had just overtaken Europe and the night-line was moving out on to the Atlantic. The Americas showed their zig-zag close to the outer edge, and the greater ranges of their mountains were still just discernible. It was strange to think that high in those mountains were observatories where even now telescopes were trained upon them. Still more odd to think of all the millions of men swarming with all their unimportant importance upon that beautiful piece of cosmic decay. . . .

Dale and the doctor moved across and joined them. The rocket was still twisting, carrying the

ILLUSTRATED BY CHESTER

She tried to grasp a stanchion, but failed; her eyes closed, and she floated inertly in mid-air.

Earth out of sight. A sudden glare from the window took them all by surprise.

"Shut it quick, or we'll all be cooked," ordered Dale.

The sun had "risen" as a mass of naked, flaring flames; its heat was intense, and its brilliance too vivid to be suffered. Dugan and Burns together slammed the shutter across.

Dale turned and made his way to the control seat where he began to study the dials and gauges. The maximum thermometer showed that the acceleration had been controlled well below the danger-point. The air-pressure and condition meters read as he had expected. The speed dial, of course, remained steady at just over seven miles a second. Not until he came to the fuel-level register did he find any great deviation from his expectations, but in front of that dial he paused, frowning. There was an appreciable difference between the estimate he had made and the reading it gave. He was puzzled.

"That's queer," he murmured to Dugan, beside him.

"It's not a great error—besides, we've gone over the seven-a-second mark," said the other.

"I know, but, allowing for that, it's wrong. It's one of the simplest calculations of the lot—the amount of power required to raise a given weight at a given speed is elementary. We can't have gone wrong over that. Half a minute."

He took a slide rule from a drawer and did some rapid calculation.

"Somewhere between a hundred and thirty and a hundred and forty pounds, I make it. Now how the hell can we have gained that, I wonder?"

"You pushed up the acceleration during the fifth minute."

"I know. I've compensated for that." He spoke to the rest. "Has any one of you brought anything extra aboard?"

Froud and Burns shook their heads. Their possessions had been weighed to an ounce. Doctor Grayson looked a trifle sheepish.

"Well?" Dale snapped.

"Er — my small granddaughter, you know. She insisted that I must have a mascot." He fumbled in a pocket and produced a cat made of black velvet. It wore a bushy tail and an arrogant expression.

Dale smiled. "Probable weight, one ounce. We'll forgive you that, Doc. But you didn't bring, for instance, that microscope of yours?" "No, unfortunately. You ought to have let me have that, you know, Dale. It might have been very valuable to us."

"So might a whole lot of things, but we've had to do without them. Are the rest of you absolutely sure that you've nothing extra?"

They all shook their heads.

"Well, it's an odd point, but apart from that, everything has gone like clockwork."

"If you had my inside, you couldn't say that," Froud observed. "I ache, not only all over, but all through. I've got serious doubts whether my stomach will ever expand again, and the very thought of food. . . ." He pulled an expressive face.

"What's next?" Dugan asked of Dale.

"Correct our course, and stop this twisting. Couches everyone."

Froud groaned. "Oh, my God! Again?"

"It's nothing much this time, but it might throw you about a bit."

For twenty minutes he and Dugan in the control seats corrected and recorrected in a series of jerks.

"That's all for the present," Dale said, at length. "You can get up now, and if you want to open a shutter, that's the shady side, over there." Turning to Dugan, he added: "Get me charts one, two and three and we'll mark the course in detail."

Dugan left the room by a trap-door in the floor. Beyond extended a metal ladder. The ladder could not be said to lead down, for there was now neither "up" nor "down" within the rocket, but it offered its rungs for the purpose of towing oneself along. The living- and control-room of the *Gloria Mundi* was situated forward, in the nose. Its floor was circular, and the walls, by reason of the projectile shape, converged slightly towards the ceiling.

Dale had decided that a separate navigation-room was unnecessary. Rocket flight, once the gravitation of Earth has been offset, is not, strictly speaking, a flight at all, but a fall. When in free space and on the correct course, the only attention required is that of slight modifications by short bursts on the steering-tubes. Since it would be theoretically possible for the ship to keep her calculated track without any correction until she was slowed for landing, he considered that the provision of a special navigation cabin would be a waste of space.

Round the walls of the main room the five shuttered windows were set at equal intervals. Between them, and capable of operation when the shutters must be closed, were mounted telescopic instruments ingeniously made to pierce the double hull. Now that a radius of movement was no longer necessary, the five slung couches could be packed more closely together, a table with a magnetised surface screwed to the floor and other adaptations made for the sake of comfort during a fall which must last almost twelve weeks.

Beyond the trap-door were the store-rooms for food and other necessities. Batteries for lighting and heating. The air supply and purification plant. A small cabin, little more than a cupboard, for use in emergency as a sick-bay. A work-bench, a small light lathe and a rack of tools for minor repairs, and even a corner fitted as a galley—though the anticipated difficulties of weightless cooking precluded hope of many hot meals.

With this second level, the habitable portion of the rocket ended. Beyond lay the fuel tanks with their tons of explosives, the mixing chambers and the pumps supplying the combustion chambers whence the expanding gases would roar from the driving-tubes.

Dugan towed himself towards that part of the store-room where the charts were kept. He pushed off and floated towards the floor; his magnetised soles met it with a slight click, and immediately he began to feel more normal. Although one had expected it, there was a slight sense of uncanniness attending a weightless condition.

He bent down, pulled open the long front of the chart locker, and then stood staring. When he had last seen them the charts had been neatly rolled into cylinders; now most of them had been flattened out by the pressure of acceleration. That caused him no surprise: what did, was the unmistakable toe of a boot protruding from between the folds of paper.

There was a short interval of stupefaction before he regained presence of mind enough to relatch the locker and go in search of a pistol. Back in the living-room he reported:

"There's a stowaway aboard, Dale."

The four stared at him as the remark sank in. Dale grunted, scornfully:

"Impossible. The ship's been guarded all the time."

"But there is. I saw——"

"And searched before we left."

"I tell you I saw his foot in the chart locker. Go and look for yourself."

"You're sure?"

"Dead certain."

Dale rose from the control desk and held out his hand.

"Give me that pistol. I'll settle with him. Now we know where the extra weight is."

He was coldly angry. The presence of a stowaway might easily have meant disaster for all of them. No wonder the ship had lagged a little to begin with, and no wonder that the fuel level had shown an unexpected reading. He pulled himself through the trap-door closely followed by the rest. The front of the locker was still fastened. He twisted the latch and flung it wide open.

"Now then. Out of that!" he ordered.

There was no movement. He jabbed the muzzle of his pistol among the papers and felt it encounter something yielding.

"Come out of it!" he repeated.

The protruding toe stirred, sending a bunch of charts floating out into the room and revealing a high boot laced to the knee. The stowaway began to wriggle slowly out of the opening, feet first. The boots were followed by breeches and a jacket of soft leather, and finally, a woebegone, grimy face. Dale, after one glance at the disordered hair around it, lowered his pistol.

"Great Scot, it's a woman!" he said in a tone of devastating disgust.

"Dear me," said Froud's voice calmly. "Just like the movies, isn't it? Quaint how these things happen."

The girl struggled free of the locker and came drifting across the room. But for her weightlessness, she would have collapsed. She put out her hand to grasp a stanchion, but did not reach it. Her eyes closed, and she floated inertly in mid-air.

"What's more," Dale added, "she's the kind that begins by fainting. What, in heaven's name, have we done to deserve this?"

The doctor caught the girl's arm.

"You can't blame her for that. We all fainted—and we had sprung couches. If she's not broken anything, it'll be a wonder."

Burns slipped a flask from his pocket.

"Give the lass a drop of brandy," he suggested.

(*continued on page* 18)

Continuing The GIRL *from* NOWHERE

The doctor thrust him off impatiently.

"Get away, man. How the devil do you think you can pour a liquid here? Do use what brains you've got."

Burns stood back, abashed and regarding the unpourable brandy with a bewildered expression.

"You'd better take her into the sick-room and look after her, I suppose," Dale said grudgingly.

Back in the living-room there closed down one of those uncomfortable silences sometimes described as "palpable." Dale paused beside the control desk and glanced at the instruments there without seeing them, for his mind was at present entirely possessed by a sense of surging indignation. Burns sat down on the side of the table and placidly awaited the outcome. Froud, attempting to drop comfortably upon one of the couches found this casual gesture defeated by lack of weight, and hung for a time in a state of puzzled suspense. Dugan crossed to one of the unshuttered windows and examined the wonders of space with noticeably discreet attention.

It was Froud who ended the mute period.

"Well, well, well," he murmured, reflectively. "And here was I thinking that I had got the only all-male assignment since sex appeal was invented. It just shows you—even a journalist can be wrong sometimes."

"If it had been a man," Dale said, "I'd soon have settled him—and it couldn't have been called murder."

"But as it *isn't* a man——?"

"Well, damn it all, why not? A woman doesn't eat less or breathe less. Is there any really good reason why she shouldn't be treated the same way?"

"None at all," said Froud promptly. "Equal pay for equal work, equal penalties for equal crimes, and all that. Entirely logical and correct procedure. But no one ever puts it into practice—this is known as chivalry," he explained, kindly.

Dale, engrossed with the problem, took no notice.

"She's just trading on her sex, as they all do—that's what it is. Taking it for granted that just because she happens to be a woman we shall do her no harm."

"No—be fair to her," the journalist said. "It's your sex that she's trading on. If the *Gloria Mundi* had had a crew of women, she'd soon have been outside. But she argues that you, being a male, won't behave logically—what's more, she's perfectly right."

"Well, I'd like to know who got her aboard. I know none of you would play a damn-fool trick like that, but when we get back, I'm going to find out who did, and——" The return of the doctor cut short his threat.

"Well?"

"Given her a sedative. She's sleeping now."

"Nothing broken?"

"Don't think so. Pretty well bruised, of course."

"H'm, that's a blessing, at least. It would have been about the last straw to have been landed with an invalid."

"I don't think you need bother about that. She'll probably be all right in a day or two."

"And in the meantime," said Froud, "all we can do is to await this probably disruptive influence with patience."

A full forty-eight hours passed before Doctor Grayson would allow his patient to be seen, and even then his permission was given reluctantly. So far, he told them, she had made a good recovery, but now the thought of her reception was beginning to worry her and retard progress. He considered it worth the risk of a slight setback to have matters out and let the girl know where she stood.

Dale immediately made for the trap-door. It would be easier, he thought, to conduct this first interview in the privacy of the tiny sick-room. To his irritation he found that he did not arrive there alone.

"What do you want?" he demanded, rounding on Froud.

"Me? Oh, I'm just tagging along," the other told him placidly.

"Well, you can go back to the rest. I don't need you."

"But that's where you're wrong. I am, as it were, the official record of this trip—you can't start by censoring me the moment something interesting happens."

"Oh, all right. I suppose you'd better come. Only don't talk so damn much. In fact, don't talk at all—if you can manage that without bursting."

He opened the door, and the two of them crowded into the little place.

The interval had worked a wonderful transformation in the stowaway's appearance. It was difficult to believe that the girl who lay on the slung couch and examined her visitors with calm appraisement could be identical with the figure of misery which had emerged from the locker. Both men were a little taken aback by the serious, unfrightened regard of her dark eyes. Neither had known quite what attitude to expect, but their surmises had not included this appearance of detached calm.

Dale returned her look, momentarily at a loss. He saw an oval face, tanned to a soft brown and framed by darkly gleaming curls. The features were small, fine and regular; a firm mouth, with lips only a shade redder than nature had intended, and, below it, a chin suggesting resolution without stubbornness. Insensibly, when faced with the particular cause, he modified his attitude to the situation in general, and from its beginning the interview progressed along lines he had not intended.

"Well?" the girl asked evenly.

Dale pulled himself together. He began as he had meant to begin, but he felt that there was something wrong with the tone.

"I am Dale Curtance, and I should like an explanation of your presence here. First, what is your name?"

"Joan," she told him.

"And your surname?"

Her gaze did not waver.

"I don't think that matters at present."

"It matters to me. I want to know who you are and what you are here for."

"In that case you will be disappointed that I do not choose to give you my other name. If you were to press me I could give you a false one. You have no means of checking. Shall we say 'Smith'?"

"We will not say 'Smith,'" Dale retorted shortly. "If you will not tell me your name, perhaps you will be good enough to explain why you joined this expedition unasked and unwanted. I suppose you do not understand that just your presence might easily have wrecked us at the very start."

"I hoped to help."

"Help? You?" His contemptuous tone caused her to flush, but she did not drop her eyes. At that moment Froud, watching her, felt some slight stirring of memory.

"I've met you before, somewhere," he said suddenly.

Her gaze shifted from Dale's to his own face. He fancied that he caught a faint trace of apprehension, but the impression was slight.

"Indeed?" she said.

"Yes, I caught it just then, when you were angry. I've seen you look like that before. Now, where was it?" He knitted his brows as he stared at her, but the answer evaded him. Out of the thousands of girls he met each year in the course of his work, it was remarkable that he should have recalled her at all—which suggested that they must have met in unusual circumstances, but for the life of him he could not place the occasion.

Dale had prepared appropriate sentiments and was not to be deterred from expressing them.

"I suppose," he said, "that you're one of those girls who think that they can get away with anything nowadays. Give a show-girl smile, and everyone is only too glad to have you along—and the newspapers lap it all up when you get back. Well, this time you've got it wrong. I'm not glad to have you along—none of us is—we don't want you——"

"Except me," put in Froud. "The S.A. angle will be——"

"You shut up," snapped Dale. To the girl he went on: "And I'd like you to know that, thanks to your interference, we shall be lucky if we ever do get back. If you'd been a man, I'd have thrown you out—I ought to even though you're a woman. But let me tell you this, you're not going to be any little heroine or mascot here—when there's work to be done, you'll do it the same as the rest. Help, indeed!"

The girl's eyes flashed; nevertheless, she spoke calmly.

"But I shall be able to help."

"The only way you're likely to help is to give Froud a better story for his nitwit public—only you've probably at the same time spoilt his chance of ever getting back to tell it."

The girl shrugged her shoulders and continued to meet Dale's gaze, unabashed by his mood. The silence lengthened. She appeared unaware that some response from her was the natural next step in the conversation. Dale began to grow restive. He was not entirely unused to young women who kept their eyes fixed on his face, but they usually kept up at the same time a flow of chatter accompanied by frequent smiles. This girl merely waited for him to continue. He became aware that Froud was finding some obscure source of amusement in the situation.

"How did you get on board?" he demanded at last.

"I knew one of your men," she admitted.

"Which?"

She shook her head silently. Her expression was a reproof.

"You bribed him?"

"Not exactly. I suggested that if he got me here, he would be the only one who knew about it and that one of the newspapers might be generous for exclusive information."

"Well, I'm damned. So by now everybody knows about it?"

"I expect so."

"But why did you do it? That's what I want to know. You don't look the kind who—I mean if you'd not been as you are, I wouldn't have been so surprised, but——" He finished in the air.

"That's not very lucid," she said, and for the first time smiled faintly.

Doctor Grayson came to the door.

"Have you two finished now?" he inquired. "Can't have you tiring my patient out, you know."

"Right you are, Doc," said Froud, rising, "though I fancy you rather underestimate your patient's powers of recovery."

Dale's anger at the finding of the stowaway had been due as much to a dread of the consequences of her presence among them as to the practical results of her additional weight. The girl, Joan, was an unknown quantity thrust among his carefully chosen crew. He saw her as the potential cause of emotional disturbances, irrational cross-currents of feeling, and, not impossibly, of violent quarrels which might make a misery of the voyage.

Ultimately it depended upon the character of the girl. If she were level-headed, they might conceivably get through without serious trouble: if not. . . . And now, ten days out (in the Earth reckoning), he still could not make up his mind about her. To all of them, as far as he knew, she was still that unknown quantity which had emerged from the locker. She had still given no reason for her presence, and yet, in some way, he was aware from her attitude, and as much of her character as she chose to show, that it had been no light whim nor search for notoriety which had driven her into this foolhardy adventure.

But in spite of her retention of confidence he was admitting that they might have been far more unlucky in their supercargo. As Froud had pointed out, they might as easily have been saddled with a fluffy blonde with cinema ambitions. Joan was at least quietly inconspicuous and ready to perform any task suggested to her. He wondered how long that attitude would last.

She was standing close to one of the windows, looking out into space. Most of her time was spent in this way, though after the first novelty had worn off, she did not seem to study the far-off suns; rather, it was a part of her aloofness from the rest of them.

Generally the talk of the rest passed her by, unheard, but infrequently a remark chanced to catch her attention, and she would turn to look at the speaker. Rarely one had the impression that secretly and privately she might be smiling.

A question of Froud's brought her round now. He was sitting at the table—sitting by force of habit, since neither sitting nor lying was more restful than standing in the weightless state. He was asking Dale:

"I've meant to ask you before, but it's kept on slipping my mind: why did you choose to try for Mars? I should have thought Venus was the natural target for the first trip. She's nearer. One would use less fuel. It was the place Drivers was aiming at, wasn't it?"

Dale looked up from his book, and nodded.

"Yes, Drivers was trying to reach Venus. As a matter of fact, it was my first idea to go for Venus, but I changed my mind."

"I wonder," the doctor put in generally, "why we do these things? It's quite silly really when we could all stay comfortably and safely at home. Is it going to make anyone any happier or better to know that

(*continued on page* 36)

Laughter

The "PASSING SHOW" Smile Section

" —and steward, when we pass Gib. please take a snap of it for me."

" Hm-m. So you're the mechanic who forgot to adjust my brakes."

" We can't let Smith go—his rheumatism is invaluable to us."

" Dear me, it's amazing what good work some of these poor fellows do."

A MAN AND A METEORITE

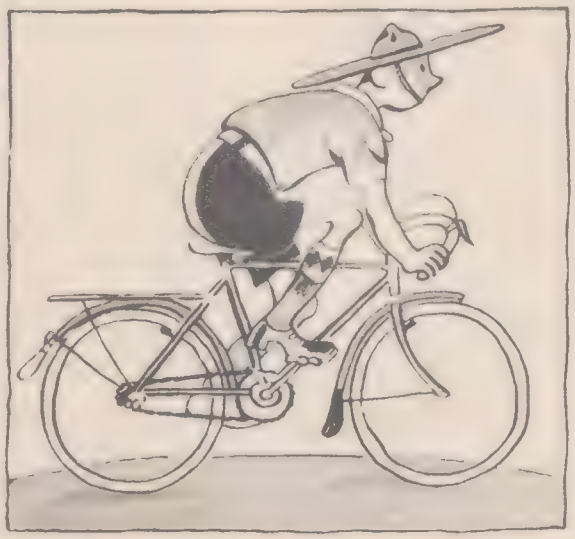
by A. C. BARRETT

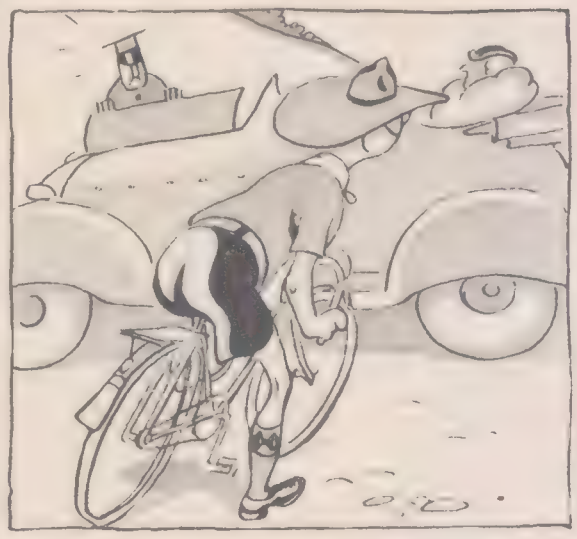
" Now, children, watch where he plants them."

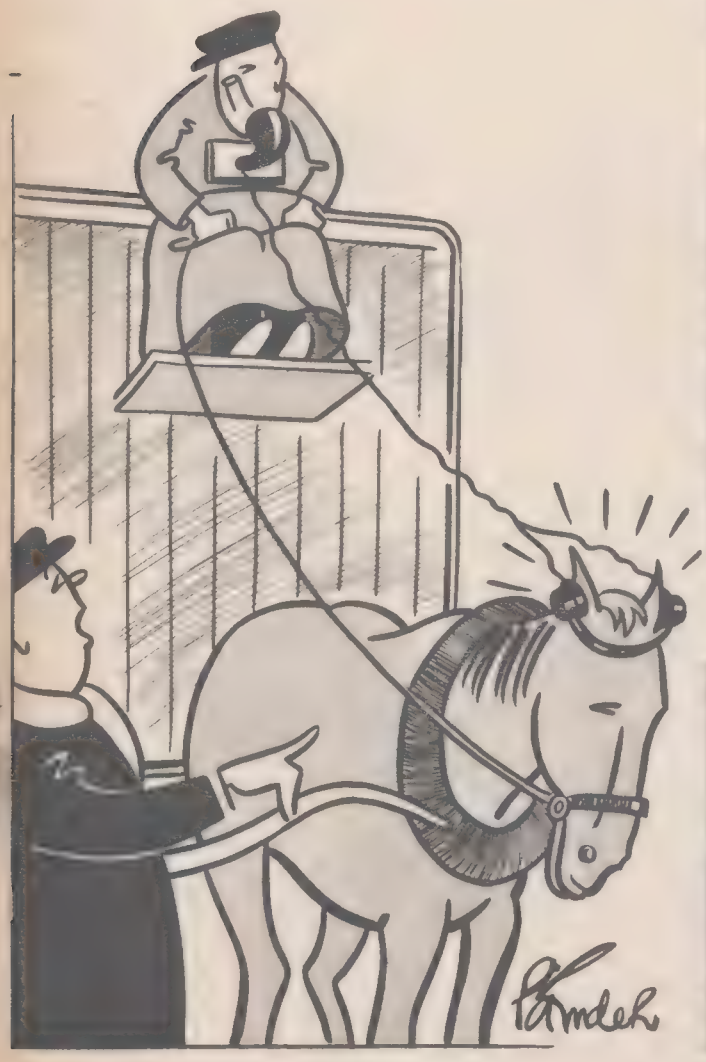
" Lovely country. Been this way before? "
" Yes. Know every inch of the road."

"I'm just trying to make a bit on the side."

"It's not burglars, my dear—but I forgot to take in my dart board last night."







"Lost yer voice again, Maurice?"

LAUGH WITH THE WORLD

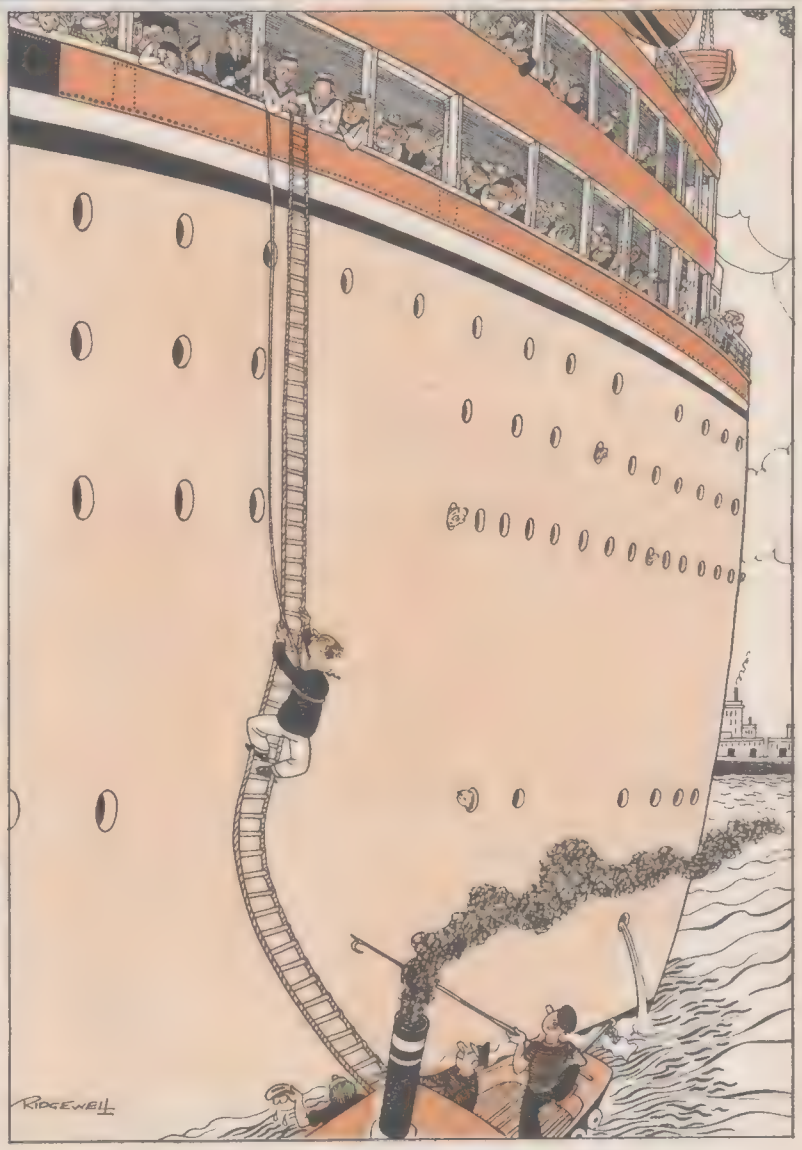
"Hey, you be more careful where you chuck your anchor!"
Smith's Weekly, Sydney.

"I'm just camouflaged to go zebra-hunting." *Koralle, Berlin.*

"So you wish to consult the great Indian Seer, Abdullah Ramanputra?"
"Yes. Tell him his sister Polly from Wigan wants to talk to him."
En Rolig Half Timma, Gothenborg.

CHIP

Life is awful hard –
It really is a teaser!
Fido's eat Cooks lard,
An' Daddy bust the geyser!

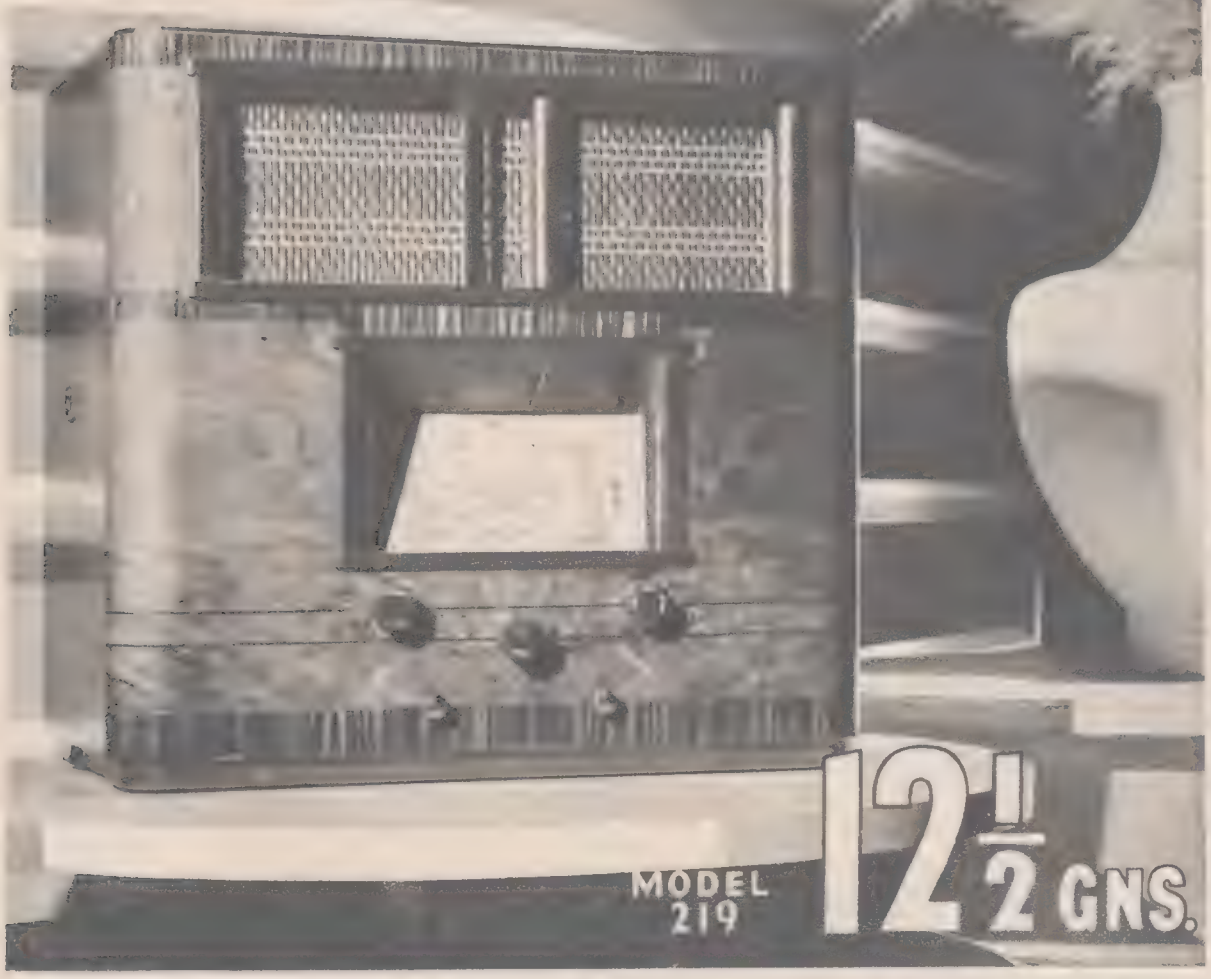


"Just as I said, Hilda—I had locked the front door!"

OLD BILL and BERT — by BRUCE BAIRNSFATHER

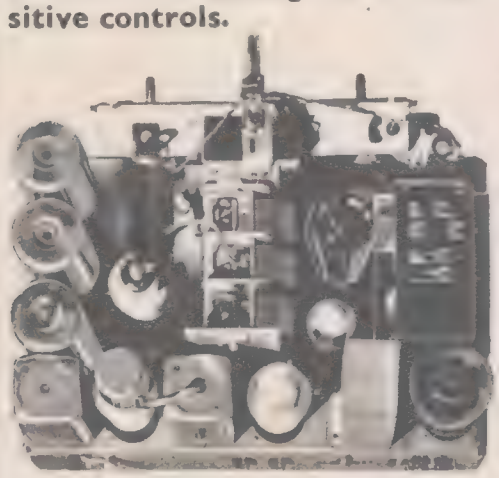
THE *NEW* MARCONIPHONES

TO WHICH ALL OTHER RADIO ASPIRES!



There is also a delightful radiogramophone Model 239 at 22 gns. which embodies all these latest features.

These entirely new Marconiphone superheterodyne models give you *all* the essentials of other radio—and so much more. The chassis is a complete departure in radio design, with a supremely effortless performance and an exceptionally wide range of programmes. In addition, the latest development in moving coil speakers provides a quality of tone that is nothing short of 'reality' itself. You cannot realise how good modern radio can be until you have heard these new Marconiphones and experienced the thrills of handling their sensitive controls.

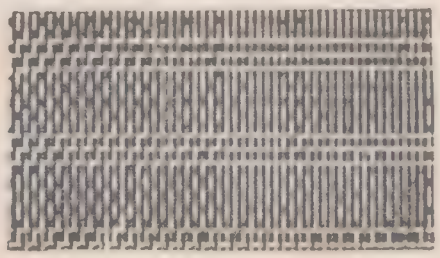


★ THE NEW CHASSIS

The real secret of the superiority of these new Marconiphone instruments lies in the ingenious combination of high-efficiency Marconi valves our engineers have devised. The 5-valve superhet circuit employs a Marconi MX40 (met.) Frequency Changer, VMP4G (met.) I.F. Amplifier, D41 (met.) Speech and A.V.C. Double Diode, MH4 (met.) L.F. Amplifier MPT4 (plain) Pentode Output, U12 (plain) H.T. Rectifier. Those who are technically minded will be able to form some idea of the possibilities of such a set from these details.

★ THE NEW SPEAKER

Here is the entirely new design of speaker with elliptical diaphragm. The advantages of this new speaker are noticeable immediately in the wide distribution of sound and the utter reality of reproduction. What an amazing difference from the tone of an old set!



★ THE METAL GRILL

Another feature of these models which adds much to their beauty and efficiency, is the attractive woven metal grill used instead of the fabric used on most wireless instruments. To appreciate fully the advantages of this new form of speaker facing, the sets must be seen and heard.

EXCEPTIONALLY EASY TERMS ON ALL MODELS

★ THE NEW CABINETS

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Complete Story

by Florence A. Kilpatrick

A MAN *in her* ROOM

FOR thirty years Miss Watson had feared to discover a man under her bed; an obsession that often assails timid spinsters with a burglar complex.

She could not have slept a wink all night had she not, before retiring, assured herself that no villain with murderous intent was lurking beneath her couch. So familiar did this habit become that even on board ship she knelt and peered beneath the low berth, where most of the space was taken up by her cabin trunk and suitcase.

As she rose from her knees a slight sound made her turn sharply—to find that she was looking into the barrel of a .450 Webley service revolver. The man behind it was standing at the door of the bathroom in the cabin. His face was set, and there was no mistaking the menace in his tones as he said in a low voice :

"Don't call out—don't move, or ——" he finished his sentence by slightly lifting the revolver.

Miss Watson found it easy to obey him, for she stood as if paralysed, so overwhelmed with fear she could not have made a sound if she had tried. For thirty years she had dreaded to find a man in her room; now one actually appeared she had no idea how to act in this crisis. Sometimes, indeed, she had dimly visualised such an intruder, picturing him as a villain with a low brow, unshaven, a red handkerchief round his throat and socks over his boots. The man now covering her with the revolver was tall, distinguished looking with—it scarcely seemed credible—almost a pleasant face. Seeing the anguish in Miss Watson's eyes, the pallor of her face, he said quite gently :

"Don't be alarmed. I assure you that I won't harm you—if you promise to be sensible."

Suddenly Miss Watson ceased to tremble. A new horror was reflected in her eyes, a dreadful dismay as she realised that she was standing before this stranger in deshabille. Her woollen long-sleeved spencer and the navy-blue woven knickers seemed to her such garments of shame that, with burning cheeks, and totally forgetting the menace of the revolver, she darted towards the bed and snatched at her cotton kimono which she drew frantically around her spare form.

"Lock the door," now commanded the intruder.

Miss Watson did so.

"Now sit down."

She sank into a wicker chair, looking at him as a kitten might gaze on a python. Then as he put the revolver in his pocket, her mind began once more to function.

"If they hadn't given me this cabin with the private bathroom this would never have happened," she thought.

Miss Watson, who was the paid companion of the wealthy and arrogant Mrs. Brackenbury, was certainly not in the habit of having such a luxury as a private bathroom when taking voyages with her employer. "Inside" cabins—those with limited space, hooks in the place of a wardrobe, and absolutely no port-hole—usually fell to her lot. But, as it happened, the *Gloriana* had sailed from Rio with a fairly small passenger list.

Mrs. Brackenbury was a valued passenger—one who travelled much and always engaged the most expensive suites—and the purser had, as a gracious gesture and without further charge, changed Miss Watson's cabin on D deck for one of the unoccupied luxury staterooms. How she had revelled in the spacious wardrobe and the joy of a bathroom entirely to herself! And now, on the first night of the installation her very life was threatened. Perhaps the intruder took her for a wealthy passenger with jewels and money to hand over, though how he could have got away with such booty did not occur to her.

Suddenly she began to cry. It was all so dreadful.

"Please don't get so distressed."

He advanced towards her. "Let me explain how I got here. The situation is unusual—I believe it is unique. You see, I'm the newest kind of stowaway. It is imperative that I should go from Rio to England—without my name appearing on the passenger list, and also without having a passport. My plan works out like this. I ascertained that the *Gloriana's* bookings for the return journey were not heavy, that there were likely to be several unoccupied cabins. Half an hour before she was due to sail, I walked up the gangway and mingled with the crowd on deck. You know what it is like at that time—the public rooms, decks and alleyways crowded with visitors and friends of the passengers, all bustle, noise and confusion. Under cover of that it was easy for me to select an unoccupied cabin and remain there when the order came for 'all visitors ashore!'"

"B—But I don't understand. Surely you expected to be discovered by the stewards."

"I was taking that chance. Stewards—even the best of them—don't bother much with an unoccupied cabin, although they are supposed to keep it dusted during the voyage. I meant to slip into the bathroom or wardrobe if I heard steps coming along the alleyway. At night I should be able to sleep on the mattress undisturbed——"

"But your food——?" Her interest was caught in spite of herself.

"I brought a suitcase packed with sufficient food to last the trip—biscuits, tinned beef, meat extract, and a flask of brandy. Water is available, of course, in the cabin. You see, I thought of everything—almost everything. What I did not reckon on was a passenger changing cabins after the ship had sailed, as you have done."

"Then you were here when I moved in this evening?"

"In the wardrobe—a risky thing for me when the steward was bringing in your luggage—but then the whole thing is a terrific risk. Unlucky you should have hit on this cabin when there is also a vacant one on the other side. Now we must share this together for the rest of the voyage."

"What are you saying?" Miss Watson rose to her feet, her terror vanishing in a burst of indignation. "Have you taken leave of your senses? I shall inform my employer—the captain—everyone—without delay. . . ." She paused at the sight of the revolver which he had once more taken from his pocket, and shrank back. "D—don't shoot, I implore you."

"I don't want to alarm you. But do listen to my explanation before you talk of handing me over to authority. Please sit down again." He replaced the revolver

She paused at the sight of the revolver and shrank back. "D-don't shoot, I implore you."

in his pocket and drew up a chair facing her. "Look me in the face. Are you really afraid of me?"

Miss Watson peered at him short-sightedly, for her glasses were on the dressing-table. Understandingly, he rose and handed them to her.

With the pince-nez riding astride her nose, Miss Watson felt more at her ease. She was now able to observe that the man she considered to be such a desperado had actually an agreeable expression. His blue eyes, fair hair, and the dimple in his chin strongly recalled an adored nephew, Raymond, who had been killed in the early days of the war.

"No . . . I'm not afraid of you." She admitted this with inward marvelling.

"That is exactly how I feel about you," he said. "I am at your mercy, but when you hear my story I don't think you will give me up. Listen. I got into a spot of bother in that iniquitous hell we've just put behind us . . ."

"How *dreadful*," said Miss Watson.

"Rio, with all its outward beauty, is a whited sepulchre . . . it has a foul underworld. I went out there to take up a job—got into the wrong set, took to dope—it's easy enough to get opium. Last week in the opium den quarter—it's in that maze of alleys behind the fruit market—there was a fight, and a man was killed."

"You don't mean that—oh, surely you're not going to say that you——" Miss Watson paused and began to tremble again.

"I had nothing to do with it. I swear that to you on oath. But appearances were against me. And I knew how much justice I should get if I fell into the hands of the Brazilian police. I got away—lay low for a week. I had a friend who helped me—it was he who planned to get me aboard this ship. I mean to begin a new life when I get back to England—to forget the evil associations of Rio. But if you hand me over, it will be the end."

"I cannot promise to help you, really I cannot," interposed Miss Watson, wringing her hands in genuine distress. "I am very sorry, of course. But you say you are innocent; surely, if you apply to the British Consul in Rio——"

He interrupted her with a laugh that was wholly devoid of mirth. "I don't intend to go back. If you give me away I shall settle the matter like this." He took out the revolver from his jacket pocket. "I'm desperate. I won't be taken alive."

She covered her face with her hands. "Promise you won't do that—oh, promise."

"It depends entirely upon you," he replied.

Miss Watson sat petrified. In the forty-eight years of her sheltered life nothing dramatic and unusual had ever happened. She was meekly submissive, used to servitude, and unaccustomed to making any decisions herself. Now she was up against a more violent situation than she could ever have conceived. The life of this stranger with the resemblance to dear Raymond was in her hands.

"What shall I do—oh, what shall I do?" she began to babble.

"I will plan everything. Your part is to keep guard and be on the look-out. When you are not here I shall conceal myself in the bathroom or wardrobe. I may be able to sleep in that vacant cabin on the other side of the alleyway—but I dare not try that until we have been some days at sea. In the meantime tell your stewardess that you are chilly and require an extra blanket—also another pillow. Then I can fix some sort of a shakedown in the bath."

"But if Mrs. Brackenbury got to know, what would she say? What would everybody say?"

"No one is going to know if you don't lose your head. I am not asking you to take undue risk, though I am putting my life in your hands. I shall not wait to arrive at Tilbury. The night before at a certain hour I shall drop quietly overboard. I have a friend with a motor boat who will be waiting to pick me up. It is really all quite simple."

Had Miss Watson not been so troubled about her own position in this affair she might have considered that these complete and perfect arrangements scarcely suggested a sudden and unpremeditated flight from Rio. But thinking now only of her own grave responsibility she faltered.

"Very well. I'll . . . I'll do my best."

All that night she lay wide-eyed and sleepless in her berth. The thought of that strange man in her cabin—even though the locked door of the bathroom was between them—was too alarming.

As for Lawrence Hallam, after carefully reviewing the situation, he began to question if it was not, after all, a fortunate thing that the unoccupied state-room of which he had taken secret possession, had been allotted to this timid spinster. His quick observant eye, his instinct for reading character which served him so well in his particular calling told him that she would be easy to manage. Credulous, too. The only real danger lay in her becoming hysterical and blurting out the truth when she was off her guard. He resolved to do all in his power to win her allegiance. She must stand by him, must. His plan had gone so smoothly up to now—a daring one that he had himself planned.

The actual theft of the diamonds which had been accomplished during their transit from the mines in Matto Grosso to Rio, was the affair of "Babyface" Despard; Lawrence had undertaken to get them out of the country. Once in London he knew where he could dispose of the uncut stones. "Fence" Bluman had been told of the deal and was expecting him. It was a big haul. The sum of £30,000 was represented in the little leather bag of diamonds which Lawrence carried in the lining of his coat.

Miss Watson was not the only one who passed that night in wakefulness. Lawrence in his improvised and uncomfortable bed in the bath, lay wide-eyed and alert through the hours of darkness, thinking of the best way to deal with the new twist in the perilous situation.

At eight o'clock precisely the brisk stewardess knocked on the door of Miss Watson's stateroom and entered with the breakfast tray . . . a modest meal of grapefruit, toast and tea, which she had previously ordered. Miss Watson, wearing a serviceable bed-jacket, while her grey hair was tucked under what was termed a boudoir cap a decade ago, looked anxiously at the tray. She was thinking of the man in her room, who must soon be "let out" of the bathroom and fed. True, he had mentioned the food "sufficient for the voyage" which he had brought with him in the suitcase, but she did not like to picture him existing on such sparse rations. She thought of his blue eyes which reminded her so much of dear Raymond. . . .

"I wonder if I might . . . if it is not troubling you too much . . . that is . . . could I have a more substantial breakfast?" she stammered.

"Why, certainly, madam." Miss Watson's face, drawn with anxiety and pale from her sleepless night, scarcely suggested the desire to eat ravenously, but the stewardess drew a menu card from beneath the bid of her apron. "Will you give me your order?"

"I think I'll have . . . let me see," her eye drifted down the long elaborate menu. "Porridge and cream, ham and eggs, hot rolls, marmalade and coffee."

While she was waiting for the meal, Miss Watson rose, "did" her hair, and put on her dressing gown and felt slippers. She waited for some moments after the stewardess had set down the well-loaded tray on a table beside the bed; then very timidly she knocked on the bathroom door.

To her relief Lawrence emerged fully dressed; her prim mind found something disconcerting in the idea of encountering a man in déshabille.

She pointed to the tray. "Don't think I've forgiven you for placing me in the most dreadful position I've ever known," she said. "But since I've promised to shield you I can't see you going without proper food."

He hesitated. "This is immensely kind of you. But it is your breakfast. I couldn't take it."

"That doesn't matter . . . I never have much in the morning. And one gets far

(*continued on page* 26)

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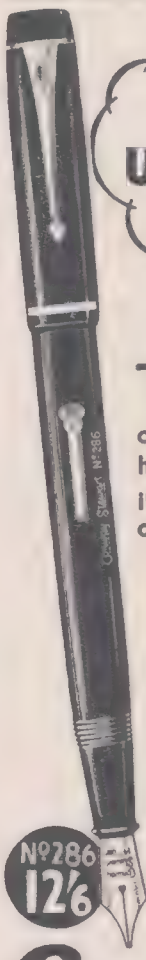

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Continuing A MAN *in her* ROOM

too much to eat on board ship, anyhow."

"I insist on your sharing it with me, or I won't touch a crumb." Taking her gently by the shoulders he forced her to sit in a chair near the table.

His manner was so masterful that Miss Watson saw it was useless to argue. "Then you must wait until I dress," she said. To sit down in one's dressing gown and eat breakfast with a strange man—even if he didn't look much older than dear Raymond—well, really, it wasn't quite nice. She took up the pile of neatly folded underclothes, delicately he looked aside and did not let his eyes rest on these intimate garments, and disappeared into the bathroom. Bathed, clothed, with her pince-nez in position, she felt mistress of herself when she returned.

Most incredible of all the happenings in the last few crowded hours, Miss Watson could not deny that she enjoyed that breakfast with the desperate intruder. It was positively a gay meal; he insisted on her having a full half of the hearty repast, positively coaxing her to eat. Looking at the cheap watch on her wrist she realised with a start that it was after nine o'clock.

"I must go at once . . . Mrs. Brackenbury will be waiting for me—she dislikes unpunctuality." She jumped to her feet in a flutter. "What is to happen to you?"

"I shall hide in the wardrobe until the bedroom steward has finished. It won't be safe to conceal myself in the bathroom during the day."

Mrs. Brackenbury had occasion to speak very sharply to her companion that morning. For Miss Watson, usually so attentive, seemed forgetful and abstracted. She could not help thinking of the young man shut up in her wardrobe all those hours, and wondering if she might return to find he had suffocated.

It was the custom of Mrs. Brackenbury, when on board, to retire after a heavy luncheon and fall into a profound slumber until the arrival of tea. Never did Miss Watson welcome this respite so eagerly as to-day. As soon as possible she hurried to her stateroom. With considerable trepidation she threw open the wardrobe door. No inert body fell forward, however; indeed, Lawrence emerged quite jauntily and she was touched to observe how pleased he was to see her.

After she had locked the door of the stateroom as usual, he set about preparing his luncheon from the food he had brought in the suitcase . . . biscuits, tinned beef and brandy and water.

"I'll order some fruit every evening . . . and perhaps I can smuggle some sandwiches and cakes from the afternoon tea, for you," she said.

Impulsively he caught her hands. "Why are you so kind to me?"

"I . . . I . . . hardly know. Perhaps it is because you resemble my dear Raymond . . . he was my nephew, you know . . . he was killed in the war."

"Tell me about him."

Miss Watson found herself talking quite easily with him. They conversed in low tones for fear of being overheard; he was relieved to be able to relax, for all the morning his ears had been strained to catch the sound of footfalls in the alleyway, he had been on the alert against discovery, tense and taut, his hand gripping the revolver in his jacket pocket. He did not listen to what she was saying, but she mistook the concentration of his regard and, flattered by such apparent interest, got out her treasured store of snapshots of Raymond, dating from the age of three months. Strangely enough Lawrence, who could certainly be termed "hard-boiled" as regards his emotions, felt a tinge of shame as he examined the faded photos and saw the flush of pride on her face when she related anecdotes of her adored nephew's youth—the nephew that he was supposed to resemble. The irony of it!

Miss Watson was quite sorry when it was time to report for duty in Mrs. Brackenbury's stateroom. Despite the haunting fear concerned in the sheltering of the stowaway, she had enjoyed the afternoon. Her mind had already become accustomed to the situation so that she was able to sleep peacefully that night, despite the awful knowledge that a man was in her room.

True, she remained alive to the danger that threatened him, and the disgrace that would be hers if he were discovered. It haunted her waking thoughts and increased her abstraction to such an extent that Mrs. Brackenbury put a sinister note into her protest.

"I don't know what is coming over you, Miss Watson," she said coldly, raising her jewelled lorgnette and raking her unfortunate companion's thin shrinking figure with a scorching regard. "I have put a question to you three times and you have not heard me—this morning you went over the same page twice when you were reading aloud—your wits seem to have gone astray. I cannot tolerate this sort of thing. I'm afraid I shall have to make a change when we get back to London."

Miss Watson turned pale and began to tremble. The nightmare of her existence was the horror of unemployment, and in this veiled threat she read dismissal. When she returned to her own stateroom that evening, she actually felt glad to see the stowaway and find someone in whom she could confide.

He seemed touched by her distress. "Why worry—you'll be able to get another job," he said soothingly.

She shook her head. "It is very difficult indeed to get a post as companion. I don't know what I should do if——" she took the pince-nez off her nose and wiped the tears from her eyes. "I mustn't bother you with my troubles," she added in a changed tone. "Yours are far more important than mine."

But Lawrence had been impressed by her pitiful position. At first he had been resolved to "play up to the old girl," work on her sympathies for his own ends, and had been secretly amused at her timidity and trustfulness. The way she had swallowed the story which his ready mind had made up in the moment of emergency—how he had grinned at that in secret. It was her faith in him that had somehow disarmed him.

Also, perhaps for the first time in his life—which had been wild and lawless—he was aware of the depths of sweetness and gentleness which can abound in the feminine nature.

Sometimes he thought that had it not been for her companionship his mind might almost have given way under the strain of his position. The constant dread of discovery, the lack of exercise, the close quarters began to prey on him. He did not object to risk or danger if a coup were to be carried out quickly—it was this prolonged anxiety that played such havoc with his volatile nature. Thus Miss Watson became the real figure that kept him sane in his isolation. He listened now with interest to her simple uninspired conversation. He got to know all her little habits, the inhibitions of her repressed nature, the delicacy of her prim mind so that she never left any of her personal garments lying about in the stateroom where they sat together at breakfast each morning.

She was quite unaware how much of her innermost thoughts she revealed to him, and certainly unconscious of how grim was the picture that she drew of her employer. In describing her life it seemed to Lawrence that it was martyrdom, pure and simple. He began to loathe the fleshy, overbearing and affluent Mrs. Brackenbury, who was such a monster of oppression.

"Why don't you make up your mind to leave her when you land—any job would be better than this," he said one evening when Miss Watson returned to the cabin pale and unnerved owing to Mrs. Brackenbury being in one of her "trying" moods.

"I wish I could," she sighed, "but if I got another post as companion it would be the same thing, you know. I often think how wonderful it would be if I could be free—if I just had a little money of my own to rent a tiny cottage in the country and keep a dog and a cat and cultivate roses. . . ." She paused. "What nonsense I'm talking—is it any use crying for the moon?"

Lawrence—who had expensive tastes—could have laughed aloud had he not been so touched. To call the desire for a cottage and a cat "crying for the moon!" He was acutely sorry for Miss Watson.

As England—and the prospect of escape—drew nearer, Lawrence thought of the necessity for action with profound relief, even though the most dangerous part of the whole enterprise was yet to be negotiated. But Miss Watson was only conscious of regret at the thought of losing a friend. Lawrence's position and his dependence on her had appealed to all that was maternal and protective in her nature. She was always planning to smuggle little delicacies to him. Sometimes it puzzled the deck stewards—she had tea served on deck—to observe that she cleared every plate on the table before her, and they remarked that for one so thin and small she had a "whacking appetite."

Though, owing to fear of Mrs. Brackenbury, she strove to be less abstracted when on duty, her thoughts turned constantly to the stowaway. Once, as a child, she had secretly sheltered and tended in an outhouse a little stray kitten that she had been forbidden to bring indoors, and it must be admitted that in some dim way Lawrence reminded her of that kitten since he looked to her to protect him.

Lawrence's luck held throughout the voyage. He had faced the inevitable narrow escapes, of course, when a steward came in unexpectedly and Lawrence had the wardrobe door open to give him air, while on another occasion he had mistaken the step of the stewardess in the stateroom for that of Miss Watson, and had been on the point of revealing himself. But he had arrived at the last stage of his voyage without mishap. The night he planned to "disappear"—praying whole-heartedly that there had been no hitch about the motor boat which was to pick him up—Miss Watson looked sad and wistful.

"I feel so worried about you," she said. "Supposing you are seen when you slip overboard? Supposing you are drowned in the darkness. . . ."

He patted her thin shoulder. "Don't worry about me. I'm used to taking risks—of all kinds. I'll never forget what you've done for me."

"And . . . and you'll keep the promise you once made to me—that you won't get mixed up with the wild sort of set you used to know in Rio?"

He concealed a smile. "Haven't I told you that I mean to go straight once I've got safely to England?"

"I . . . I . . . wish you would let me know how you get on. I don't suppose there is anything I could do to help you ever again . . . but I'd like to hear from you some time. This is my address—care of Mrs. Brackenbury, Grosvenor Square." She held out a slip of paper with the address in her precise sloping handwriting.

This time he did not smile. "You may not hear from me again—ever. Don't condemn me for that. I'm a wild, roving sort of chap. But I shall always remember you as the kindest and most decent woman I've known. . . ."

The episode ended there. Lawrence made his getaway quite safely, while Miss Watson was on her knees in her stateroom praying more fervently than she had ever done in her life.

"Let him land safely, please, *please*, God. Don't let anyone see him escape . . . take care of him. . . ."

And since there was no hue and cry that night, nor any mention of unforeseen happenings the next day, she believed more firmly than ever in the efficacy of prayer.

For some weeks after her return to London, Miss Watson cherished a secret hope that she might get a message from the stowaway. In vain. But there came a letter from a firm of solicitors saying that if she would call on them she would hear of something to her advantage.

They had, indeed, some wonderful news for her. It appeared that a distant cousin of her mother's—of whom she had never even heard—had died in Australia and left her a sum of two thousand pounds with which to buy an annuity. It seemed too dazzling to be true and the solicitors had some difficulty in persuading her that it was not a hoax.

Miss Watson now lives in a tiny cottage in Sussex, where she grows roses, and keeps two cats and a dog. She is very happy, does a great deal of church work and is much respected. For how could anyone—least of all Miss Watson herself—suspect that her life income has anything to do with the loss sustained by the Bolivian Mines Syndicate of a certain packet of diamonds during the transit of the stones to Rio from Matto Grosso?

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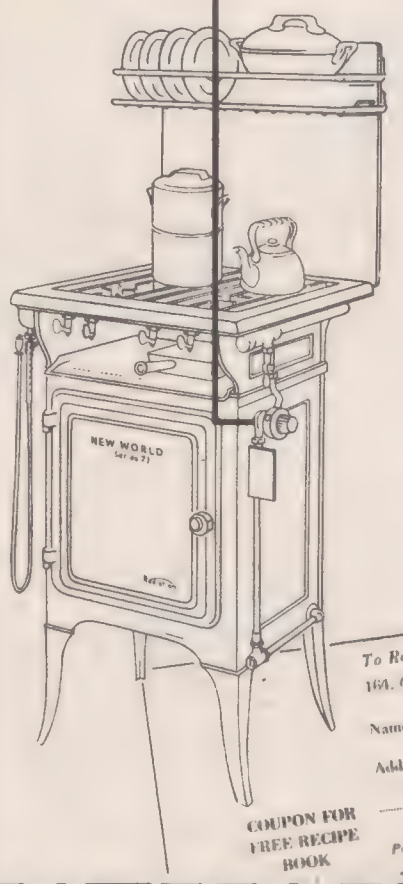

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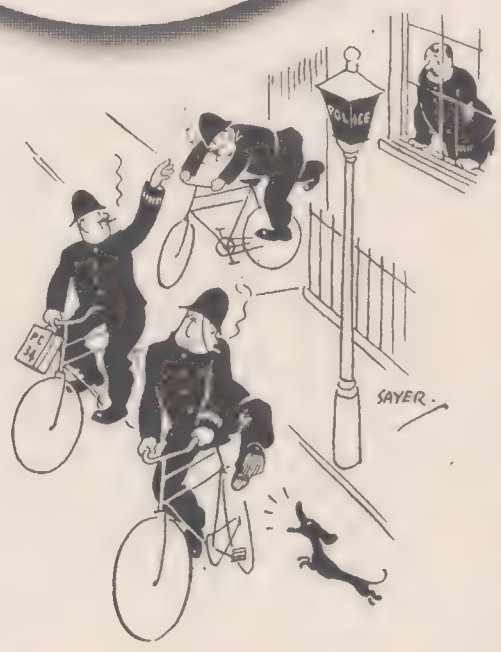

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LIVES *in the Melting Pot*

IF motherhood did not carry in itself its own deep satisfactions, it would be hard indeed, for it sometimes looks as though the bond between mother and child were forged only to be severed.

Birth and weaning are inevitable separations but it is not easy to face the pangs caused by the child's going to school, knowing that divergence of mind, growth of personality and interests and new friendships will follow.

Few mothers reconcile themselves to this without a struggle; it is difficult for them to see their daughters' needs and problems disinterestedly. With clinging intimacies of babyhood gone, it is small wonder they try to seek compensation for the loss in a satisfying companionship.

Yet at this time we feel our daughters need care and protection as never before. Maturity has given us a view of life that cannot but make us anxious about their welfare. And our fears are by no means groundless.

Friendships made at this time may have a great influence, with deep and far-reaching effects, so you wish them to be of the right kind, preventing emotional entanglements that may follow from causing unhappiness.

Some years ago I knew a girl of eighteen with an unusually beautiful voice. She became attracted to an oldish man who was musically very gifted. The mother suspected entanglements in his life which boded ill for her daughter's happiness. Also she feared he would influence the girl to take up singing professionally. Out of her desire to shield her child from risks, she made attempts to become her friend and confidante.

So the love affair went on secretly, until its final breakdown embittered the girl so much that she has never since formed any attachment. She left home, and following the safe profession for which her mother had had her trained, she sought solace for life's frustrations in her music, a talented, dissatisfied amateur.

The decisions that have to be taken at this age about work and occupation may affect the course of a life.

So, in the instance I have given, the mother, instead of trying to satisfy the child's needs by playing the dual rôle of protector and friend, should have helped develop her musical gifts. Then she would have provided her with the interest of congenial work and a variety of friends in a new environment. The man would likely have faded out sooner, leaving a less devastating memory.

The mother wanted two contradictory things. She wanted to advise and help her daughter and at the same time to share her companionship as though she were an equal who obviously did not need such advice and help. She could not have it both ways; as it was, she could not have it either way.

Adolescence brings further complications to the mother. She sees someone dear to her, her second self almost, standing where she stood many years before, when life seemed full of hope and unlimited promise. Life has brought her much fulfilment but many disappointments. She knows what it holds for her and what it can never give her.

"I wish I were young again and had her opportunities," is often in her thoughts if not on her lips, but when she tries passing on her wisdom and experience, she is giving her children the feeling of life's limitations—the price she has paid—and she can't help being something of a wet blanket. She may even want to be.

How often you hear, "I got on all right without that when I was her age. She must understand she won't be able to have things all her own way."

In a family I know there are two daughters of seventeen and eighteen, pretty, charming, warm-hearted, sociable, eager. The mother is capable, domesticated, intelligent, good-humoured—the living heart of her household. The home circle expresses stability, mutual confidence, lack of prudery.

If you were to see this affectionate group laughing and talking together you would think the relationship between mother and daughters ideal, the atmosphere a perfect one for adolescents to grow up in.

Yet there are complaints. "They don't make friends," their mother says. They have many contacts with young people of their own age, but these do not ripen into the satisfying intimacies customary at this age. The mother realises there is something wrong, and, with an eye to future matrimony, worries about it. The girls say that their friendships always seem to peter out, but they know they

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"It is at this time we feel they need care and protection more than ever before."

WOMAN to WOMAN

by Sophia Lauterbach

are not the types to make friends easily, for they are difficult to please.

A letter from their mother, postponing one of my rare visits, gave me the key to the situation.

"Do come next week instead," she wrote. "The girls have something on this week, but they will be free then. We are so eager that they should be at home when you come, for they are friends and companions to us now."

Their mother did not understand that friendship is only possible between people with something of the same degree of maturity. It had not occurred to her that even if her children were able to share her friendship and her friends, it might not be for their good. She herself was shutting them off from the thing she regarded as essential—young people of their own age.

Sharing their mother's friends meant sharing their friends with their mother. Without realising the dilemma, they had found a way out of it. They managed so that they had no friends to share.

Every so often we are startled, even shocked, to hear of some young suicide. Such statements as, "He was of a very happy disposition," or, "No, he had nothing on his mind. Only last night he was happily planning . . ." or, "He seemed a bit moody at times, but we thought it was . . ." reveal how little understanding the parents had of what was going on in their children's minds, and what a gulf there can be between the two generations. If this gulf can be bridged at all, it is not by attempts at friendship, for which their is no real basis, but only by helpful insight.

Some years ago, a writer said, "Parents with their experience of life have none of the illusions about the child that the child has about the parents." To that I would add, "And none of the illusions about the child that the child has about himself."

The child needs these illusions before he can get experience.

I know a woman who is one of life's misfits, mainly because her childish dependence on her mother ripened into a close friendship which robbed her of her youth.

By nature ardent and adventurous, she became sedate and sensible beyond her years. She settled down to an uninspiring marriage lacking romance. Now, nearing forty, thwarted, disgruntled, at loggerheads with her husband, at odds with her children, envious of other women, she is relapsing into a chronic invalid.

At adolescence, with life in the melting pot and youth as the alchemist, thought and emotion are being tried out. It will be years before they attain wisdom and assurance.

Betty, in the nursery, thought her father built a fine tower of bricks. Yet she got more fun out of her own, and preferred it, although it was unsteady and soon toppled over. It is no different when Betty gets older.

As to friendships, it is only with those who stand where they do, and in a spirit of detachment from the home circle, that they can have their exhilarating and interminable discussions on politics, on ethics, on life.

Our tempered enthusiasms, our reasoned compromises cramp them, put them off their stroke. They are living urgently, naively, sifting, exploring. They must not be fettered by our more sober outlook, or they may find themselves pushed off their road.

Mothers have played their parts in this rehearsal for the drama of life. Now they have to wait in the wings until they are needed.

The Jesuits said, "Give us a child for the first five years of his life and whoever you will may have him afterwards." That has turned out to be sound psychology. The child is moulded in his earliest years. It is a mistake to think that any fundamental change in character can be brought about in later life.

At adolescence the mother must hold a watching brief. She has to apply her understanding to the situation. With her longer view she can give a background of tranquillity in the home, which is an invaluable steadying influence.

Infinite tact will be required of her, and the ability to tolerate without comment the awkward and often absurd behaviour of her young.

Like any Spartan mother, she will have to steel herself to allow her children to live dangerously.

She should make few demands, yet be there to help effectively if the need is expressed.

In motherhood, more than in anything else, virtue really is its own reward. She will have the happiness of seeing her sons and daughters growing up into self-reliant men and women of whom she can be proud.

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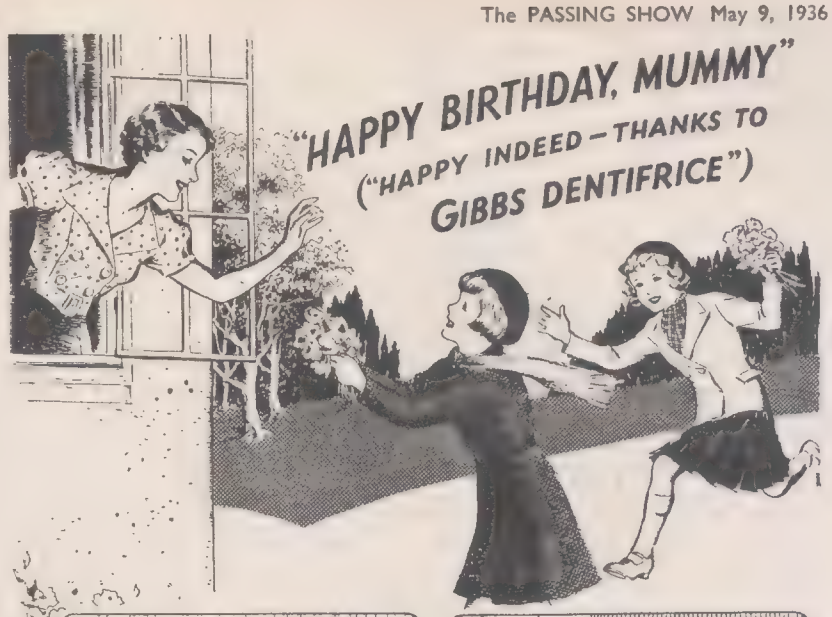

"Jan feels sick and headachy again Mummy," announced Pen. "She *is* run down," thought Mummy, "I'll take her to the Dentist tomorrow. Mrs. Grey thinks it may be her teeth."

"That's it!" said the Dentist, "Fermenting food particles, decay germs, make horrid poisons. All night you absorb them. They make you ill."

"Let her use Gibbs Dentifrice," he went on. "And be sure you clean BACKS as well as fronts, young lady, NIGHTS as well as mornings." Jan carries out her promise faithfully.

Gibbs keeps her teeth clean and healthy. Now she is lively and jolly and it was SHE who thought of getting up to pick flowers before breakfast for Mummy's birthday.

GIBBS DENTIFRICE penetrates every nook and cranny of the teeth and mouth and under the gum edges; neutralising acids, sweeping away poisons, killing germs. Teeth are polished to the lovely whiteness of healthy, unscratched enamel; gums kept firm and rosy; the mouth made delightfully fresh. Safe for children, sure for grown-ups, Gibbs Dentifrice is the ideal family dentifrice . . . change to Gibbs to-day.

YOUR TEETH ARE IVORY CASTLES—*defend them with*

Gibbs DENTIFRICE

NOW IN TWO FORMS
SOLID CAKES
In Tins 7½d., 1/-, 1/6
Refills 11d.
TOOTH PASTE
In Tubes 6d. & 1/-

GD117A

WHAT CAUSED THAT HEADACHE?

Some people get a splitting headache through eating certain kinds of food or staying up late at night, or working in an overheated room, or shopping. Whatever the cause the chief thing is to get rid of the pain quickly, and for that there is nothing finer than ZOX, a remedy famous for nearly forty years. Zox has proved efficacious when everything else has failed. It is equally good for Neuralgia and all nerve pains or for reducing a high temperature.

Zox is obtainable from Chemists and Stores at 2d. each or 1/6 and 3/- per box, or the proprietors, The Zox Mfg. Co. (Dept. 18), 11 Hatton Garden, London, E.C.1, will send two Powders free to any reader enclosing a 1½d. stamp for postage.

You've used Odol—of course. Your mouth feels cool and clean . . . your teeth are white and sparkling. No wonder you're smiling . . . you're proud of your lovely Odol Smile!

Odol

CLEANS TEETH

TUBES 6d. & 1/-

FREE! A TRIAL TUBE OF ODOL TOOTH PASTE!

Try an Odol Smile! Post this coupon in an unsealed envelope (½d. stamp) to Cranbux Ltd., (Dept. P.S. 44), Norwich, and a trial tube of Odol Tooth Paste will be sent you post free.

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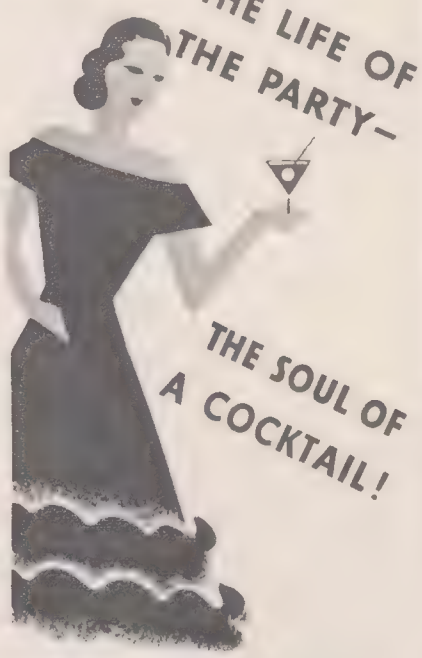
Address .....

(*Not Irish Free State*)



Hampstead's humming, Chelsea's chattering—there's a new, intriguing flavour captivating London's jaded "cocktail-leurs." Lillet! The famous aperitif—puts new cunning into your cocktails. F'r'instance, two-thirds Lillet, one-third dry gin, ice, a flavouring of lemon and you have a drink fit for the gods—and the gourmets. Get a 5/6 bottle of Lillet for your next party—it's a date! Twiss & Brownings & Hallowes, Ltd., 16 Water Lane, E.C.3.

FREE! Folder of Cocktail Recipes.

LILLET

PUTS THE 'O K' IN COCKTAIL

Keymer

A *Complete Short Story by* MILES HENSLOW

Suddenly, he found himself passing his gun to the detective.

Where's Alfie?

IT was five o'clock, and the sun still shone gaily into the length of the cul-de-sac. At the far end, where a few sticks of grimy trellis and smoke-blackened creeper showed above the high brick wall, a group of chattering urchins were gathered in noisy debate. From the various windows which faced each other above the long, double row of garages, a few dutifully interested faces awaited the beginning of the game.

As a rule, this was timed for about six o'clock, after the shops and offices had closed and released the more prominent members of the "eleven"; but this was a special occasion. The "Wasps" from the "Oval"—more correctly called Burton Mews by the County Council, were visiting the "Tiddlers" on their home ground, "Lords," or, as the enamelled plate by the archway proclaimed it, Adam Alley.

"Where's Alfie?" called one in an unnecessarily shrill voice. He leaned casually upon what had once been a cricket bat and looked towards the archway and the street beyond.

"Yes, where's Alfie?" The group turned with one accord to gaze in the same direction, taking up the cry in chorus. It was unlike Alfie to be late, and as he was their captain they would have to wait for him.

"'Ere 'e is," called the owner of the bat, "'ere 'e comes. Come on Alfie. We bin waitin' for yer."

"Sorry chaps," replied the captain. "I only just got away. We bin busy to-day. I reely didn't ought to've come yet either. Mr. Bernstein don't know. Where's the Wasps?"

"Not 'ere yet," came the chorus.

"Well, what's the 'urry?"

"Why, we wants you ter mark the pitch, 'course."

"Aw, come on," said Alfie, "couldn' one o' you done it?"

He fumbled in all his bulging pockets with great deliberation, and finally produced a piece of chalk from his waistcoat. He knew it was there—even as he knew that none would dare usurp the privilege of marking the pitch.

The team looked on in comparative silence as he drew three crooked wickets and bails upon the uneven brickwork. Alfie was, at that moment, a person of considerable importance.

No one realised this more than Mr. Bernstein, his employer; though he would have been the last to admit it. He considered that the fifteen shillings which he paid young Alfie each week were more than adequate. Not for the world would he have jeopardised another shilling by praising his useful subordinate.

"Alfie!" he called again, "Alfie! Drat the boy. Where is he gone now? Alfie! Can you hear me?"

But nothing disturbed the silence of the shop; nothing but the buzzing of a persistent bluebottle which sizzled and bumped against the window, striving to regain the freedom of the sunshine without.

"Confound the boy. What do I pay him for anyway. Al-fie!"

Mr. Bernstein wiped his forehead from the effort of his repeated calling and gazed desperately round his little shop. It still needed forty-five minutes for closing time and he had promised Mrs. Forsythe faithfully that she should have her watch back by 5.15.

"Not a minute later, Mr. Bernstein, as I have to catch a train!"

Himmel! It was already 5.15. And Mrs. Forsythe was a good customer, too. That terrible boy. "Al-*fie!*"

But there was no reply, and Mr. Bernstein lifted his eyes in silent prayer, lowering them again a moment later to swear volubly to himself. There was only one thing for him to do. He must lock the shop and deliver the watch himself.

Taking off his worn leather apron, he began to move swiftly about behind the counter, putting away things which might get lost, straightening his tools, and locking the money in the safe. By the time he had fastened the door and taken a last look round, the hands of the big clock in his window pointed to 5.25. With an oath for the business he felt sure he would lose, and another for the inconsiderate heat of the afternoon sun, he broke into a clumsy trot, heading in the direction of Mrs. Forsythe's house.

Slogger Thompson did not see Mr. Bernstein's hurried departure because he had just passed the shop for the third time that afternoon. And he was strolling in the opposite direction. There were only two things in Slogger's pocket: a sixpence and a gun.

But for the fact that one or two passers by had been gazing into Mr. Bernstein's window on each occasion, Slogger Thompson's business would have been concluded long before. It would only take him a couple of minutes; but those two minutes must be uninterrupted.

He reached the end of the road and turned again in the direction of the shop. He had just passed one policeman and he could see another walking away from him in the distance. He was in luck. The way was more or less clear. He smiled as he increased his pace.

He paused for a second, apparently to gaze at the trays of rings behind the plate glass, and saw that the counter was unattended. He walked swiftly to the door and pushed on the handle. It was locked.

Slogger Thompson was no fool; moreover he was superstitious. He realised that his luck was out. Every other shop in the road was open. It was obvious to him that he should take that for what it meant. He swore, shrugged his shoulders, released his fingers from the butt of the revolver, and felt for the sixpence. He had not eaten since eight that morning, and a café across the road looked inviting.

As he sat down and ordered a cup of tea and a ham roll, he noticed something familiar about the man at the next table. Then his heart bounced a beat as he recognised him. It was Peters of the C.I.D. He was smiling. He beckoned to Slogger to join him.

"Well, Slogger," he said quietly, "what's the game this time?"

"Nothing," said Slogger sullenly. "Can't a bloke sit down for an honest cup of tea without a Dick watching him?"

(*Continued on page* 32)

Good News for your complexion

Every woman's skin is inherently beautiful, and it only requires this simple beauty treatment to unfold its full loveliness.

At least twice a day—and this is more important than all other beauty aids—gently massage your skin with the rich creamy lather of PEERLESS ERASMIC Toilet Soap. Blended from the finest oils and "creamed" no less than *twenty-six* times, the lovely silky texture will give you a skin which is soft and clear.

And Erasmic, with its rare *HERBAL* essences, will be a tonic to your skin and surround you with an attractive fragrance that will harmonize with your favourite perfume.

Here is your simplest beauty treatment — PEERLESS ERASMIC. Use it daily.

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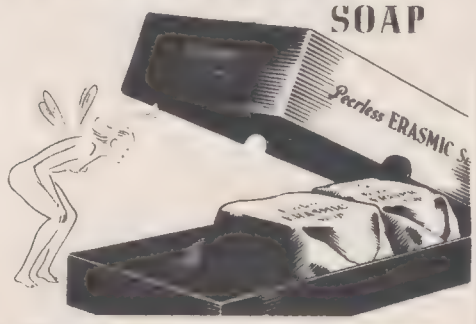

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Three-tablet boxes, 1/6.
Rich Violet or Opal White.

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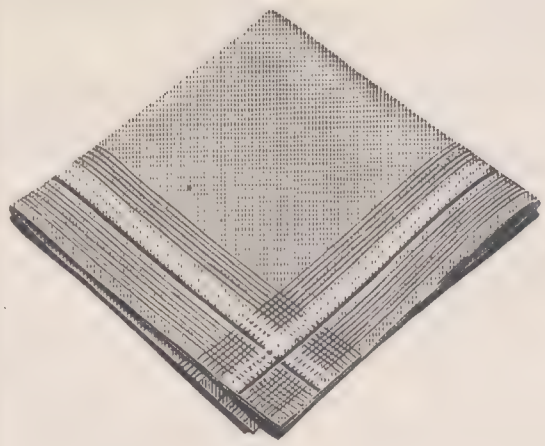

AREN'T WE ALL?

Staid city gentleman. Quiet, almost sombre, in attire. But at heart—a jolly rebel, a schoolboy still. When you put a Pyramid handkerchief in your breast pocket—a handkerchief with a gay touch of colour in its border—you fly the flag of liberty. A most economical luxury, these Pyramids. Delightfully soft, surprisingly long-lasting. Every colour and shade and pattern at your service. See the latest at your outfitters.

See registered trade mark label on every Pyramid handkerchief.

PYRAMID

HANDKERCHIEFS
FOR MEN AND WOMEN

MEN'S fancy white and colours - - - - 9d
MEN'S plain white hemstitched - - - - 6½d
WOMEN'S white and colours - - - - - 5d

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SILVIKRIN *DOES* GROW HAIR - - - - - - - Proof No. 1875 (Pudsey)

scalp in *APPALLING* CONDITION-

Hair now thick, lustrous and rich

MR. CHAPPELL, in describing the 'appalling condition' of his scalp (his letter is below) is describing *one of the first symptoms of hair starvation.* Dandruff, scurf, hair coming out on the comb—these things mean that the hair is not getting its natural food. And if it goes on being starved, the end is—baldness.

What *is* the hair's natural food?

In youth, the hair grows thick and healthy because the bloodstream in the scalp feeds it with *fourteen separate and distinct chemical compounds.* Directly this supply fails, baldness threatens.

It was Dr. Weidner's great contribution to science, first to discover exactly what these fourteen compounds were, and then to prepare them in a form the hair-root could absorb and use from external application. The result of Dr. Weidner's researches is Silvikrin. Silvikrin is the hair's *natural* food, so that if the root is still alive, Silvikrin is bound to make the hair grow.

What Doctors say

Silvikrin is not a secret formula. It has been submitted for test to doctors and hospitals. Their reception of it was amazing. Doctors praised the scientific way in which the problem of hair growth had been attacked, and were really enthusiastic when they proved for themselves that the problem had been solved. In fact, Professor Polland, the famous Austrian dermatologist of Graz University, got such astonishingly good results with Silvikrin that his report was sweeping in its praise. His remarks are quoted in full in the leaflet enclosed with every bottle of Silvikrin.

This is the experience, too, of thousands of people who have written to us. 'After trying scores of preparations' they write. 'Failure.' Then Silvikrin—success.

Read this typical case

'Dear Sirs, My scalp was in an appalling condition—dryness, redness, dandruff, falling hair, lack of lustre and life, colourless—dead generally. Now my scalp is clean and fresh, hair has ceased to come out. There is colour, lustre and a richness that I had almost despaired of obtaining again.' *L. Chappell,* 23, *Richardshaw Lane, Pudsey, Yorks.*

WHAT DO I NEED?

For dandruff—hair beginning to fall. To keep the scalp healthy, strengthen the hair and bring out its natural beauty—

Ask for SILVIKRIN LOTION

For severe dandruff, serious falling hair, bald patches. To restore new hair-growth use the *concentrated* natural organic hair food—

Ask for PURE SILVIKRIN

Obtainable from all good chemists, hairdressers and stores.

The roots need feeding

How Silvikrin feeds hair. The black bulbous 'root' can come right out—the real root is the fibrous growth underneath. It is *this* that Silvikrin feeds.

Silvikrin does grow hair

32—F

THIN RUNDOWN NERVOUS PEOPLE!

MAKE THIS SIMPLE TEST!

See How Easy It Is to Add Pounds of 'Stay-there' Flesh, New Strength, Health and Energy *Without Use of Drugs*

"VIKELP" Tablets, the amazing MINERAL and FOOD IODINE Concentrate from the Pacific Ocean, get right down and correct the real underlying cause of thinness, nervous run-down conditions and systemic illnesses—FOOD IODINE AND MINERAL STARVED GLANDS. When these glands don't work properly you suffer from malnutrition and all the food in the world can't help you. It just isn't turned into "stay-there" flesh. The result is you stay "*too thin,*" tired-out, pale, ill and run-down.

The most important gland, the Thyroid and other tiny hidden glands, which actually control body-weight and strength—need a definite, evenly balanced ration of the 12 essential body MINERALS plus FOOD IODINE (not to be confused with chemical iodides which often prove toxic, or mere iodine fumes).

Only when the system gets an adequate supply of FOOD IODINE and MINERALS can you regulate metabolism—the body's process of converting digested food into FIRM FLESH, New Health, Strength and Energy. To get these 12 essential life-giving MINERALS in assimilable form (Chlorine, Potassium, Calcium, Sulphur, Magnesium, Phosphorus, Iron, Manganese, Copper, etc.) and FOOD IODINE so sadly lacking in the cooked food we eat—take "VIKELP" Tablets, made from an amazing Pacific Ocean plant—now recognized as the world's richest source of these precious substances.

Make This Test

First weigh yourselt and see how long you can work or how far you can walk without tiring. Then take 3 "VIKELP" Tablets with each meal for 10 days, and again weigh yourself and notice how much longer you can work without tiring and how much farther you can walk. Notice how much better you feel, sleep and eat. Faulty metabolism, malnutrition, constipation, goitre, gastritis, rheumatism and other systemic illnesses are corrected or disappear entirely. Watch flattering extra pounds appear in place of scrawny hollows. If you don't gain extra pounds (8-9 pounds not uncommon) within these first 10 days, the trial is FREE. Whatever you have tried before try "VIKELP" Tablets today. *Contain no drugs.* 40 tablets 1/9d., 100 3/6d., 225 6/9d., 675 17/6d. If your dealer cannot supply you send 3/6d. for 100-tablet trial package to Dept. PAS/5/1, Health Products Laboratories Ltd., 10 Henrietta Street, Cavendish Square, London, W.1.

VIKELP *Body Building Tablets*

...to wipe away

UNWANTED HAIR

The latest discovery of science. A perfumed toilet cream which ends superfluous hair in three minutes.

Razors only make the hair grow faster. The old-fashioned depilatories are evil-smelling and dangerous. This new beauty cream, called New Veet, makes the hair simply fall away. You just apply it from the tube and then wash off with water. Leaves the skin soft, smooth and white without a trace of hair. No ugly dark patch like the razor leaves because the hair is removed *below* the skin surface.

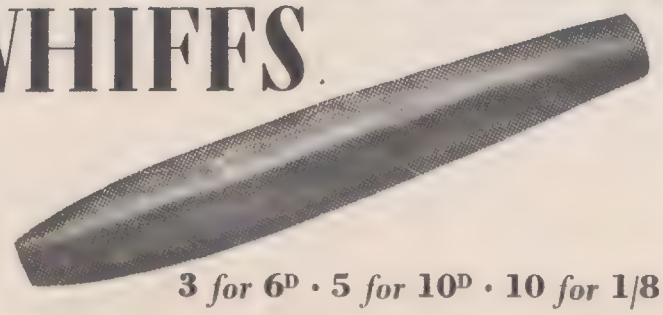
New Veet is just like a sweet scented toilet cream, and as easy and pleasant to use. Prices 6d. and 1/3.

There's nothing to beat a little cigar!

WHEN YOU CATCH AN EARLY TRAIN

A MARCELLA Whiff can be a compensation as well as a delight! When business calls you earlier to town than usual, light up one of these cheery little 'smokes.' Their cool, mellow fragrance is at once soothing and satisfying.

MARCELLA WHIFFS



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MWISA

IF YOUR BREATH HAS A SMELL YOU CAN'T FEEL WELL

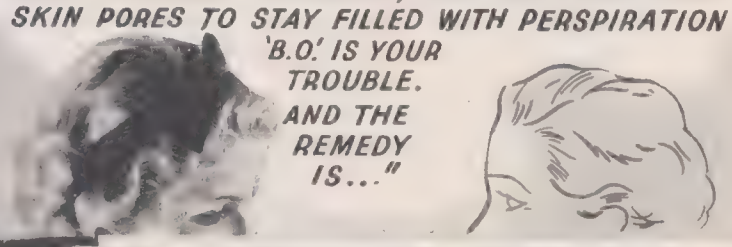
Unless 2 pints of bile juice flow from your liver into your bowels every day, your movements get hard and constipated and your food decays unnaturally in your 28 feet of bowels. This decay sends poison all over your body every six minutes. It makes you gloomy, grouchy and no good for anything.

Your friends smell this decay coming out of your mouth and call it bad breath. Laxatives and mouth washes help, but you must also get at the cause. Take Carters Brand Little Liver Pills. They get those 2 pints of bile flowing freely and then you feel on the "up and up." Ask for Carters Little Liver Pills by name and get what you ask for. 1/3d. and 3/-.

No more eating her heart out!

MARY WAS MISERABLE *BECAUSE* **JACK** WAS SO HORRIBLY COOL

DORIS *(WHAT A FRIEND!)* SPOKE FRANK WORDS TO MARY. *"YOU'RE CARELESS ABOUT PERSONAL FRESHNESS,"* SHE SAID. *"YOU ALLOW SKIN PORES TO STAY FILLED WITH PERSPIRATION 'B.O.' IS YOUR TROUBLE. AND THE REMEDY IS..."*



HERE IS MARY GETTING BACK HER PERSONAL FRESHNESS WITH LIFEBUOY TOILET SOAP — THANKS TO THAT HEALTH ELEMENT LATHER. IT DEEP CLEANSES!

AND NOW MARY KNOWS THAT PERSONAL FRESHNESS COUNTS MUCH MORE THAN GOOD LOOKS!

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True Life Stories

Ten guineas for *your* True Life Story if you write it yourself in printable form; two guineas if you send us only a summary. That is "Passing Show's" invitation to readers, made because we believe in the old saying that "Truth is Stranger than Fiction"

UNTIL a few months ago when, owing to the slump in the Dutch East Indian tea trade I was unfortunately "axed," I was an assistant on a big tea estate in the Deli district of Sumatra. And it was during my third year there that I had the misfortune to be indirectly responsible for a man's death.

Jan Van Leer, my Dutch fellow assistant, had his own ideas about the handling of native labour and they differed entirely from mine. He belonged to the old school of planters who believe in "treating 'em rough." But whatever his methods he certainly was a first class assistant and always got his work done in record time.

At this particular moment he had gone down with a bad attack of five days' fever and I was more than usually busy in consequence.

The morning's work ended I was on my way home for tiffin when I met my manager, Mynheer Westhof. We talked for a few minutes about the pluck and various other things in connection with my job.

"I want you to try that Madurese, Mistar, as overseer," he said. "He seems to be shaping well and maybe he can get some work out of those idlers in Block E. Give him a trial, anyway. I can't put him in Van Leer's section because he hates the sight of the native for some reason or other. You'll weigh leaf, of course, until Van Leer's up and about again. You might drop in and see him on your way down. And tell him when he pulls round that I've had a cable from head office to say we are to start work on the coast-railway as soon as possible."

Leaving the manager I hurried down the grassy road winding past the factory and climbed the hill to Van Leer's "afdeeling." A few minutes later I mounted the steps of his wooden bungalow and, going into the bedroom, pulled the mosquito net aside. He was tossing restlessly beneath a thick layer of blankets in the throes of high fever. His wild fever-racked talk and laughter filled the whole bungalow.

"Ahmad, you idiot!" he yelled. "What is the matter with you? Have you gone deaf? Get my bath ready . . ."

His boy came noiselessly into the room.

"Watch over master," I shouted above Van Leer's ravings. "Keep clothes on. And on no account let him get up, understand? When master gets very hot and the fever talks he may want a cold shower. Give him this drink, but there must be *no cold bath* . . . understand?"

"*Baik, tuan.*"

Leaving the room I nearly fell over the crouching figure of Mistar, the Madurese. When I asked him what he wanted he merely said that he had come to inquire about the sick *tuan*. It is not unusual for natives to show such solicitude. But many a time since I have reflected on the odd circumstances that made a native whom the Dutchman particularly detested choose that precise moment to visit him, for it was during those few brief moments of his call that the seed of a future murder was sown.

As soon as Van Leer had recovered we began mapping out the track of the new coast-railway from the estate down to the sea, by which means the tea could be shipped on small steamers to the port of Belawan and all the heavy land transport charges avoided. It meant a saving of over fifty per cent. on overhead costs.

Hundreds of coolies were put to work with a *mandoer* in charge of each gang. The manager, who liked Mistar as much as Van Leer detested him, appointed the Madurese as chief *mandoer*.

For some reason or other Mistar seemed to take a liking to me. The Dutchman, sensing this, taunted the native as often as possible when I was there, or at least within hearing.

It was gruelling work. Transport of material was difficult. There were constant interruptions, continual danger from panthers, herds of wild pig, snakes, besides the thousand and one minor irritations like scorpions, red ants, mosquitoes, and the inane chirping of crickets all night.

Van Leer grew worse tempered with the passing days and the Madurese changed from the laughing, rather talkative, native I had known into a sullen, mechanical slave.

And one day I noticed that Mistar was carrying a *kris* inside his *slendang*. I also noticed the look in his eyes whenever they rested on Van Leer, and I remember thinking that I had never before seen so much concentrated hatred. Now a Madurese is dangerous if only for the reason that he is patient and that he usually gets his man. He will wait for years if necessary in order to achieve his object. He has that reputation in the Islands, anyway. When I told the Dutchman this he simply laughed at my fears and told me he needed no lessons on how to handle natives.

One morning I went up to the Madurese during a brief rest period. He was squatting on the ground, polishing the handle of his *kris*.

"Mistar," I asked him. "Is not your pruning knife enough? Why must you also carry your *kris*?"

"It is for safety, *tuan*," he replied. "The Achinese are great thieves." Then he added, apologetically, and taking it for granted that I knew his thoughts. "Tuan Van Leer is always *panas hati* (angry)."

"Mistar," I told him. "There was once a Madurese who killed a white man. The police found him lying on his belly and licking the knife clean of his victim's blood—according to your custom. They, too, were very angry. The murderer was locked in a room, and then made to scrape salt in the mines. He became blind, and no one loved him. (A literal translation of the fact that no native prisoner is allowed a wife). Don't you understand?" I urged, in what I hoped was an appeal to his common sense. "I know all your

All the Native's hatred showed in his monkey face. Van Leer raised his whip . . .

Accidental MURDER

thoughts. But you, too, would suffer if anything happened to the *tuan*. You would be the most foolish native in all Sumatra if you used this knife. Let me hold it safely for you until *hari besar* (Native New Year).

"Besides," I added, hoping to mitigate things somewhat, and remembering that Van Leer had mentioned only that morning that he was afraid he was in for another bad go of fever, "the *tuan* is sick again with fever . . ."

"*Saya, tuan*," he answered, quickly. "I understand now."

He handed me the *kris*. "*Tuan*, I understand," he reiterated.

A look of delighted cunning crept over his face, a look that puzzled me at the time but which I understood only too bitterly later on—when it was too late.

In spite of my efforts at peace-making, however, the situation grew steadily worse, but I contented myself with the fact that I had at least gained possession of Mistar's *kris*, and without which I felt sure he would take no action against his tormentor.

Van Leer was betraying the familiar symptoms of malarial fever, but in his anxiety to press the work forward, he refused to take any special precautions.

It had been a terrible day. The sun burnt down in a steady blinding glare, splitting the earth into great cracks with its heat. We could now glimpse our journey's end, the sea, but it still looked miles away. So much back-breaking work yet to be done. Our undertaking had never seemed so difficult. That black patch of jungle with its tangled creepers, its hordes of stinging insects; that stretch of shifting sand; that rocky ground, still to be won. Everything seemed suddenly hopeless. And Van Leer had an alarmingly high temperature, but still refused obstinately to give in until the very last moment. . . .

I signalled Mistar to stop work. He blew his whistle, walked over into the shade of a huge banyan tree, and sat down on one of its giant roots. The Dutchman, dizzy with fever, scarcely knowing what he was doing, but anxious to vent his general fury at the heat, dust, and entire misery of the day on the native he so unreasonably hated, strode furiously after him.

"Who told you to sit down, you—? Who's in charge here I'd like to know? Answer me, you——" He used the worst native insult.

I held my breath. The Madurese had not removed his *ikat*, and he was now standing in defiance of the rule that all natives—overseers and contract coolies alike—must remove their headgear, squat on their heels, and keep their eyes lowered when addressed by a European. All his hatred of the Dutchman showed in his monkey face, glowed in his dark eyes.

Suddenly Van Leer raised his whip, hesitated, and sank helplessly to his knees, his body shaking with the tremors of malaria tropica. I remember my feeling of thankfulness for tragedy averted as, with the help of the coolies, I carried him into his tent and covered him with all the coats and blankets I could find. It was then I noticed that I was feeling rather weak myself. . . .

I was vaguely conscious of being put to bed and of some liquid being forced down my throat. Overwhelming nausea swept over me, and my body felt as if it were on fire. I longed to bury myself in deep cool water. . . .

Ten days later I was back in my bungalow, sharing it this time with the assistant who had "taken over" for me during my absence. And he it was who broke the news to me of Van Leer's death.

"You've been raving about him all the week. I promised Westhof not to tell you until you were getting better," he said, apologetically. "It was all the fault of that fool of a Madurese *mandoer*. He took charge when the two of you went down with fever. The silly old idiot fell asleep when he was supposed to be on guard, and Van Leer threw all his clothes off and raced down to the river. In the middle of the night, mind you, The poor devil contracted pneumonia, of course. . . . That's the story Mistar brought back, at any rate. Westhof's worried about the report he's got to make. Says in his opinion it was no accident at all. But what can he do? He can't prove anything. He's got a grim turn of humour, too. . . . Suggests sticking it down as 'Accidental Murder.' Not a bad description either."

A hideous feeling of complicity swept over me. Had the Madurese placed a wrong construction on my last words to him? I remembered only too vividly the occasion when he had overheard my instructions to Van Leer's Boy.

I stammered out something which fever and a raw throat did their best to render unintelligible.

"What happened to who? The Madurese? Oh, Westhof sacked him . Odd, though, how the coolies seem to have taken to him. They gave him the most terrific send-off."

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Continuing The GIRL *from* NOWHERE

man can cross space if he wishes to? Yet here we are doing it."

Joan's voice came from the window, surprising them.

"It is going to make us wiser. Don't you remember Cavor saying to Bedford in Wells's *First Men in the Moon*, 'Think of the new knowledge!'?"

"Knowledge?" said the doctor. "Yes, I suppose that is it. For ever and for ever seeking knowledge. And we don't even know why we seek it. It's an instinct, like self-preservation; and about as comprehensible."

Joan's voice surprised them again.

"Did you ever read J. J. Astor's *Journey to Other Worlds?*"

"Never heard of him. Why?" Dugan asked.

"Only that he seemed to feel rather the same about it, right back in 1894, too. As far as I remember he said: 'Just as Greece became too small for the civilisation of the Greeks, so it seems to me that the future glory of the human race lies in the exploration of at least the Solar System.' Almost the same idea, you see."

The doctor looked curiously at the girl. "And is that your own view, too?"

"My own view? I don't know. I can't say that I have considered the underlying reasons for my being here; my immediate reasons are enough."

"I'm sorry you won't confide them. I think you would find us interested."

The girl did not reply. She had turned back to the window and was staring out into the blackness as though she had not heard. The doctor watched her thoughtfully for some moments before returning to the rest. Like Dale he was now quite certain that no mere whim had led her to board the *Gloria Mundi*, and he was equally at a loss to ascribe any satisfactory reason for her presence. His attention was recalled by Froud saying:

"Surely the cause of our being here really lies in our expectations of what we shall find on Mars. The doc is primarily a biologist, and his reason is easy to understand. I, as a journalist, am after news for its own sake.

"It'll be amusing," he went on, "to see which of the story-tellers was nearest the truth. Wells, with his jelly-like creatures, Weinbaum, with his queer birds, Burroughs, with his menageries of curiosities, or Stapleton, with his intelligent clouds? And which of the theorists, too. Lowell, who started the canal irrigation notion, Luyten, who said that the conditions are just, but only just, sufficient for life to exist at all, Shirning, who——?"

He stopped suddenly. The rest, looking at him in surprise, saw that he had turned his head and was looking at the girl. And she was returning his stare steadily. Her expression told them nothing. Her lips were slightly parted. She seemed to breathe a little faster than usual. Neither of them spoke. Dugan said:

"Well, what did what's-his-name say, anyway?"

But the rest took no notice. The doctor was frowning slightly, as if in an effort of memory. Dale looked frankly bewildered, the more so for he noticed that even Burns' attention had been caught. Froud, with his eyes still on the girl's face, raised his eyebrows interrogatively. She hesitated for a second and then gave an all but imperceptible nod.

"Yes," she said slowly, "I suppose they'll have to know now."

Froud twisted round to face the others.

"Gentlemen, the mystery of the *Gloria Mundi* is solved. I present, for the first time on any space ship, Miss Joan Shirning."

The effect of the announcement was varied.

"So that was it," the doctor murmured half aloud, as he looked at the girl again. Burns nodded, and eyed her in the manner of one reserving judgment. Dugan goggled, and Dale merely increased his expression of bewilderment.

"What's it all about?" he asked irritably.

"Good Lord, man! Surely you can't have forgotten the Shirning business already?"

"I seem to have heard the name somewhere, but what and when was it?"

"About five years ago. Grand newspaper stunt. Started off great and then flopped dead. You couldn't help——"

"I must have been away—besides, I spent the last part of 1976 in a Chinese hospital over that Gobi Desert crash. What was the Shirning business?"

Froud looked at the girl again.

"Miss Shirning will be able to tell you about it better than I can—it's her story."

"No." Joan shook her head. "I'd rather you told what you know of it first."

After a moment's hesitation Froud agreed.

"All right. And then you can fill in the details. As far as I can remember, it went like this. John Shirning, F.R.S., D.Sc., etc., was professor of Physics at Worcester University. It's not a large place, and they were lucky to have him, because he was a biggish shot in the physics world. However, he'd been there several years, and it seemed to suit him all right. Well, sometime in the autumn of 1976 he mentioned to a friend, in confidence, that he had come by a remarkable machine which he could not understand either in principle or operation. As far as he knew, it was unique, and in the course of the conversation he let slip the suggestion that it might even be of extra-terrestrial origin.

"Well, the friend was less of a friend than Shirning thought. Either he really thought that Shirning was going dotty, or else he wanted to create the impression that he was. Anyway, he started spreading the yarn left and right. Now, mind you, if it had been about any Tom, Dick or Harry, nobody would have taken any notice, but because the tale was hitched on to Shirning, people began to get curious. They started hinting about it and soon got to asking him outright what this mysterious thing was, and he made the primary mistake of not denying the whole thing and stamping on it then and there. Instead, he told them to mind their own damned business, which, of course, they did not. Then, after a bit, the press got hold of it, and started being funny at his expense.

"The University faculty stood it for a week or so, and then they tackled him. Told him he was making the place a laughing-stock, and would he please give a public denial of the story right away. Then he shook them a bit by saying he couldn't do that because, in his opinion, it was the truth. Of course they opened their eyes, pulled long faces, shook their heads and didn't believe him—and you can hardly blame them. So, to cut it short, he said that the thing, whatever it was, had been in his house for nearly a month now and he was more convinced than ever that no one on Earth had the knowledge necessary to make it. And if they didn't believe him, he'd show it to them the next day—what was more, he'd show it to the press, too, and he defied any of them to explain what the thing was, or on what principles it worked.

"The following day he allowed about twenty-five of us to come to the show—I was covering it for the *Poster*—and we were all crowded into one room of his house while he gave a great harangue about his machine. We listened, some of us bored, and some of us quite impressed, while the University authorities looked just plain worried. Then he said we should see for ourselves. He had just opened the door to lead us to his lab. when his daughter—by the way, I apologise to Miss Shirning for being so long in recognising her—when she came running in to say that the thing had gone."

"You mean stolen?" Dale asked.

"No, that would have been fishy enough at the critical moment, but this was worse. She said it had dissolved itself with chemicals in the lab. Shirning sprinted along with the rest of us behind him. All we saw was a large pool of metal all over the floor, and he went nearly frantic. . . .

"Well! I mean to say! Can't you imagine the results? It was a gift to the cheap rags. They made whoopee with it, and tore Shirning to bits for a public holiday. He had to resign his post right off. It was the end of him as far as his career was concerned.

"But, if it was a stunt, the most puzzling thing about it was, why should he do it? And, even more pertinently where a man of his talent was concerned, why should he do it so badly? A man of his standing had no need of even mild stunts for self-advertisement, let alone an impossible thing like this. The most charitable talked darkly of overwork, but he didn't look overworked to me. After that, he and Miss Shirning disappeared, and it all petered out as these things do.

"That's a straight view of the public side of the affair, isn't it, Miss Shirning?"

"That's what happened, Mr. Froud. And considering what most of the other journalists there wrote in their papers afterwards, I think you are being very fair."

"Don't be too hard on them They had to earn their bread."

"They earned it by breaking my father."

"Sounds like nonsense to me," Dale put in. "Do you mean to tell me that Shirning actually claimed that this machine was not made on Earth, at all? That it got there from another planet?"

"To be accurate," the girl told him, "it came from Mars."

"Oh," said Dale, and a prolonged silence fell over the living-room of the *Gloria Mundi*.

"You still stick to it, then, both of you?" Froud said, at last.

"We do."

"And so I suppose we have found out at last why you are here?"

"Yes."

"I don't see that that gives you any good reason for stowing away on my ship," Dale said. "Even if you do stand by such a fantastic yarn, we should find out what there is on Mars whether you're with us or not."

"I told you before that I came to help," said the girl calmly. "I wrote to you, but you didn't answer my letter, so I came."

"You wrote! My God! The moment the news of this flight got out half the world started writing to me. I had to have a batch of secretaries to sort the mail. They put the stuff into piles: would-be passengers, mystic warnings, crazy inventors, plain nuts, beggars, miscellaneous. Which was yours The odds are in the favour of 'plain nuts,' it was the biggest class."

"I offered my services."

"Of course. So did a million or so others. How?"

"As an interpreter."

Another withering silence fell on the room. Froud was unable to restrain a chuckle as he caught sight of Dale's face.

"Look here, young woman," said the latter, when he had recovered his power of speech, "are you trying to have a game with me? If so, I don't think it's very funny."

"I'm perfectly serious."

"Evidently it was the 'plain nuts' list. However, I can play, too. May I ask what University is now giving degrees in conversational Martian?"

Joan continued to face him unabashed. She said, slowly:

"Nor is that very funny, Mr. Curtance. I can't speak it, but I *can* write it. I fancy that I am the only person on Earth who can—though I may be wrong in that."

"No," said Dale, "don't qualify. I'm thoroughly prepared to believe that you're unique."

She studied him for a moment.

"In this matter, I am. And," she added, "I have also had a unique opportunity of studying the particular type of facetiousness to which the subject gives rise. I suggest that as you have now allowed your reflexes to relieve themselves in the conventional style, you might, just for the time being, control your brain after the manner of an intelligent person."

"Atta girl!" murmured Froud appreciatively, during the subsequent pause.

Dale reddened. He opened his mouth to speak, and then thought better of it. Instead, he relapsed into a condition akin to sulks.

"Miss Shirning," said Froud, "as you know, I was at that meeting at your father's house. I didn't think it funny, as the others mostly did. I knew your father's reputation too well to put it down as a hoax. Besides, nobody watching him closely could have had any doubt that he believed every word he was saying. But after the anti-climax, of course, he could do nothing, and neither of you would tell us a word more of the story. What was it?"

"What good would it have been? We'd lost the only true proof—the machine itself. Anything we could have said would have been more fuel for the humorists." She looked at Dale as she spoke.

"Machine!" said the doctor, emerging explosively from his silence. "You keep on talking about a machine. Good heavens, girl, there are thousands of different kinds of machines, from sewing-machines to mechanical navvies. What was this language-teaching machine of yours—a kind of tele-typewriter?"

"No. Nothing like that. Nothing like anything we know. I can show you, if you're really interested."

"Of course I'm interested. If it's true, I'm interested in what you found. If it's not true, I'm interested in your mental condition. The one thing I'm sure about was that it wasn't an intentional hoax, or you wouldn't be here. Is that fair enough?"

"All right," she agreed. She fumbled in a pocket and produced half a dozen pieces of paper. "After it destroyed itself, our only record was a movie we had made of it. These are enlargements from that film."

The doctor took the photographs. Froud came behind him and looked over his shoulder. In the background he recognised a view of Shirning's house at Worcester, but the object on the lawn in the foreground caused him to give an exclamation of surprise. It appeared to consist of a metallic casing, roughly coffin-shaped and supported horizontally upon four pairs of jointed metal legs. Four of the pictures were taken from various angles to give a good idea of the whole, and one of them, which included Joan Shirning standing beside it, enabled him to estimate the length of the casing at a few inches under six feet. Another was a close-up of one end, showing a complicated arrangement of lenses and other instruments grouped upon the front panel, and the last gave detail of a section of the side, showing the attachment to the casing of two lengths of something looking not unlike armoured hose save that each piece tapered to its free end. Looking again at the full-length photographs, Froud saw that, in some, all four of these side members were closely coiled against the body of the machine, while, in others, they were outstretched, apparently in the act of waving about.

"Dear me," he said thoughtfully "So that was the great Whatsit as it appeared in life."

The doctor grunted. "But what did it do? What was it for? People don't just make machines because they like them, they make them to do something."

"That," said Joan, "is exactly what we thought. It could do quite a lot of things. But my father thought—still thinks, in fact—that its primary purpose was communication."

Dale silently held out his hand, and the doctor passed the photographs across, saying to the girl:

"Won't you tell us the whole thing from the beginning and let's see what we can make of it?"

"I second that," Froud added.

The girl glanced at the other three. They said nothing. Dale was looking in a puzzled fashion at the photographs. Dugan avoided her eye. Burns maintained his stolid, non-committal front.

Joan made up her mind. "I will, but on condition that you don't interrupt, and that you keep your questions till the end."

The two men nodded.

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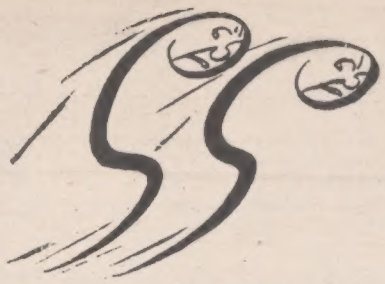

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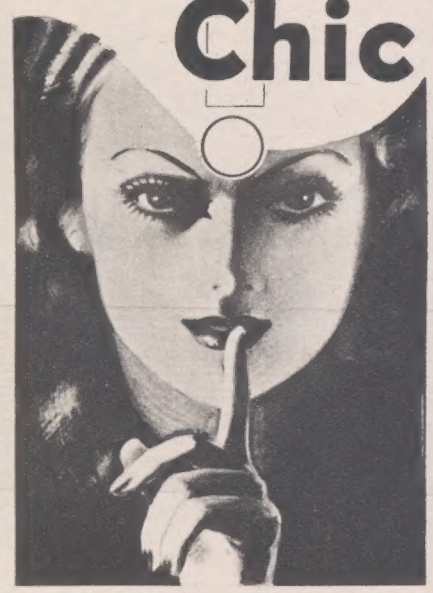

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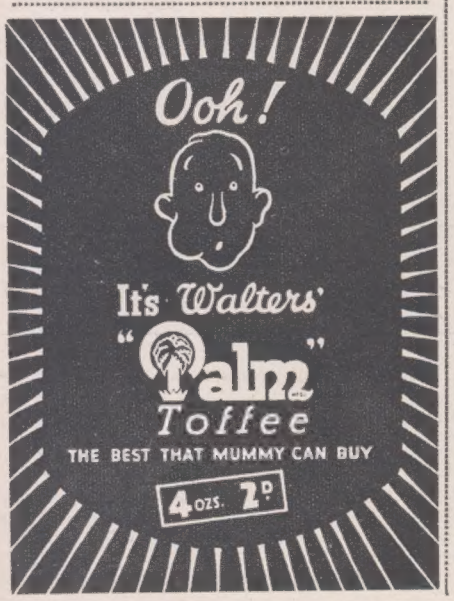

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FINE, FIERCE FLAMES of reform burn in Mr. G. A. Lloyd, of Hull, making him all hot about our complacency in the matter of gas bombs and such powerful emetics as warlike scientists who look on peace as the interval between trying out the old gun and finding another.

Did you ever hear the story, asks Mr. Lloyd, of the man fishing outside a lunatic asylum when an inmate who'd been watching him through the railings told him he'd better come inside the pearly gates because the water he'd been fishing was "casual water," as the golfers call a puddle.

"It makes me wonder," says Mr. Lloyd, "when I notice the idiotic things we do, whether the people in asylums are really mad or whether they are more sane than we are. Some are put away because they are dangerous to humanity. What about those people who spend their time inventing machines for destroying humanity? Are scientists sane when they produce poison gases? We're all mad or we would lock the lot up.

"Yes, as Bill Shakespeare said, 'way back in sixteen hundred and something, to those people who would insist on going to hear his plays, ' 'Tis a mad world, my masters.'

"At that time they didn't put sane people in padded cells; they allowed them to go about ' as likely to do one thing as another.' Since then, of course, politicians have become wise to the dangers of having sane men about. Anyway, no man could remain sane when he found that the war in which he struggled to make the world safe for democracy, had made it unsafe for democracy in at least four countries."

Meantime, Mr. Lloyd, having got this off his chest, will probably cool down when he realises that the happiest time in a man's life is when his illusions begin to scoot around the corner.

"Excuse me, my ball, I think".

THEN ALBERT RACE, of Sheffield, is feeling upset by the "thousands of societies that exist for the purpose of stamping out sin and making this world a paradise of goodness."

"Think what a place it would be if everyone was good," wails poor Albert. "No happy-go-lucky rogue to entertain us over a pint of the best with his exploits. No detective stories; in a state of dull goodness they would be unbelievable. All women would be good and about as priggish as it is possible for a really good woman to be. No wink from a saucy eye.

"Traces of original sin in boys would be a thing of the past; they would just be lumped in a bunch at the top of the class as being perfect specimens.

"Footballers would say, 'Excuse me, my ball I think,' and even golfers would fill their cards with truthful figures. And the editor would confess that Brother Paul and Uncle Joe were but figments of the imagination."

Don't worry, Albert. A world rid of its theatres, cinemas, beer-gardens, pretty girls and laughing cavaliers would blow up of its own despair before dawn. But don't begrudge those good souls with a mission in life the pleasure they get out of turning us into paths of sobriety. They will find in time that we are all made to pay the penalty of our virtues.

THAT TACTLESS REMARK about the authenticity of these invaluable colleagues Brother Paul and Uncle Joe, brings to mind painfully the opinion of Mr. Thomas V. Bedwell, of Walthamstow, who has many rude, really rude things to say about this page, despite the fact that he has been a satisfied reader for many years.

"Maybe I am too highbrow, or perhaps again, unsophisticated," he says. Anyway, he cannot take it.

"I have puzzled for hours wondering who Uncle Joe might be. At times I imagine him as a henpecked husband who can only answer back by letter. Perhaps . . . but why bother—he seems to enjoy it." And that's just what we say.

After congratulating us, for which we all—Brother Paul, Alfred, the office boy, Uncle Joe and all—take a bow, Mr. Bedwell congratulates himself on getting this letter off his mind, ending his peroration with—"You're telling me!" But are we telling him?

YOU SEE IT'S ABOUT time we straightened this out because Francis Harris, of Stroud, Gloucester, comes "me crankin' in" with the thought that you're not telling us in "You're Telling Us" at all.

He wants to know whether any other readers share his discovery, because at present he feels like a Daniel standing alone.

"I once decided," sez he, "that those readers contributing this page were telling you. At last I see a light"—Oh, noble Daniel!—"and it shows 'you're telling us.'

"The last few lines of this Brilliant Page"—what ho, Mr. Bedwell, are you listening?—"contain the Parthian Shot. You are telling us and you are laughing up your sleeve while you give us the credit for telling you."

So we'd best adjourn while Uncle Joe works, with Einstein's assistance, to find Who's Telling Who. At the same time he'll have to help Alice Jackson, who is trying to prove that cats have a beneficial effect on rheumatism and nervous complaints, as we seem to have suggested in our wicked past.

She wants to know how to abolish the feeling of nausea produced by these creatures in a person about to undergo the cure.

ALICE LIVES IN THE Wonderland of Barcenaciones, Santander, Spain, and has a splendid cook whose only fault is a tendency to throw fits at intervals during the day.

"This in itself," she says, "would not bother me, but these attacks come on just when she is most concentrated on her work.

"Inspired by your advice, I bought a cat and suggested she should sleep with it. Going purple the dear woman screamed and went off into one of her worst fits. I wondered desperately whether I should begin the cure at once but the cat bounded from my arms and seemed uninclined to purr.

"I was relieved when the cook recovered, but what she told me left me rather preoccupied.

"The sight of cats, she said, gave her vertigo with a tight sensation at her throat and top of her head. She declared she would go to pieces if she held the cat in her lap."

So she wants our advice. Where is Uncle Joe? Doesn't he realise the importance of this humanitarian cry from our far-flung Spanish frontier? 'Tis a mad world, Mr. Lloyd.

SERVICE on motoring, travel, holidays, dress, finance, home, education, and every other practical subject is given free by "The Passing Show" Advice Service, 31 Bow Street, London, W.C.2. Enclose stamped envelope with query.

Solution Next Week

CLUES DOWN

1. Talking places.
2. Palindromic woman from first man.
3. Gadgets in part.
4. Poems in spice.
5. Stocking places.
6. A rock in leash.
7. This for the brave but possibly payment.
8. 27 without its middle.
9. Substituted.
11. Red gun (anagram).
12. Reference in brief.
13. Exceedingly delightful.
18. Frequently with neither.
19. Orderly arranged.
23. Equal result.
25. Only half assets.
26. This is usually in a rage.
28. So is a schooner.
29. Retain as it is.
31. Takes warp and woof.
32. Must be two here.
33. Life-measure.
34. Coast for the races.
36. Harvest.
38. Lateral aspect.
40. This pro nobis.
41. Could scarcely be more familiar.
43. Ate and drank (hidden).
46. Includes 41 and me.

CLUES ACROSS

1. One of these is before you.
6. Tops the bill.
10. A fearsome creature.
14. Such a department should be skilful.
15. Where men do dwell.
16. Just a fish.
17. Acts with reason.
19. Mode of election (abbreviation).
20. More than a roll but much the same.
21. Ear-pieces.
22. Section of item.
24. This is in serenity.
25. Give the devil his due.
27. Intention.
29. Small time.
30. Something to eat presumably.
32. Model shape.
34. Tail of 25 across.
35. So bird-prison is a form of tenure.
37. This we do daily.
39. Fame little desired.
42. Authoritative proclamation.
44. A slight shaking.
45. Now for possession.
47. A female.
48. Sorrowful.
49. Truce for the condiments.
50. 43 becomes Grecian.

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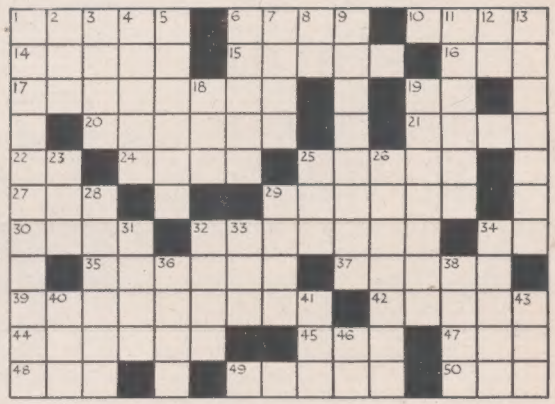
Solution to last week's puzzle.



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"No sign of varicose veins now."
"Rheumatoid arthritis gone; I have never felt better."
"All signs of phlebitis gone."
"I had suffered for years from a weak heart, but Elasto cured me."
"Completely healed my varicose ulcers."
"Now free from piles."
"Your free sample gave wonderful relief."
"I feel 10 years younger."
"As soon as I started taking Elasto I could go about my work in comfort; no pain whatever."
"Had rheumatism so badly I could hardly walk, but Elasto cured me."
"My skin is as soft as velvet, thanks to Elasto."
"The stinging sensations I used to get in my left arm and leg (Arterio-Sclerosis) are quite gone and my general health is much improved."
"Varicose veins quickly cured after 12 years of useless bandaging."
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"No sign of Varicose Veins Now"

How grateful I am I gave Elasto a trial! My leg had been bad for years but now, thanks to your wonderful remedy, there is no sign of varicose veins and I feel ever so well in myself. My friends all say how young I seem. I nip about like a girl of 16, and yesterday I rode 30 miles on my cycle. I cannot speak too highly of Elasto, and to think the cost is so small. I don't think that any woman should be without Elasto, quite apart from leg troubles, and I shall keep a bottle by me.

Signed Mrs. A. WASSELL, 2, Cecil Street, Watford.

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This Wonderful BIOLOGICAL REMEDY *WILL SAVE YOU* POUNDS!

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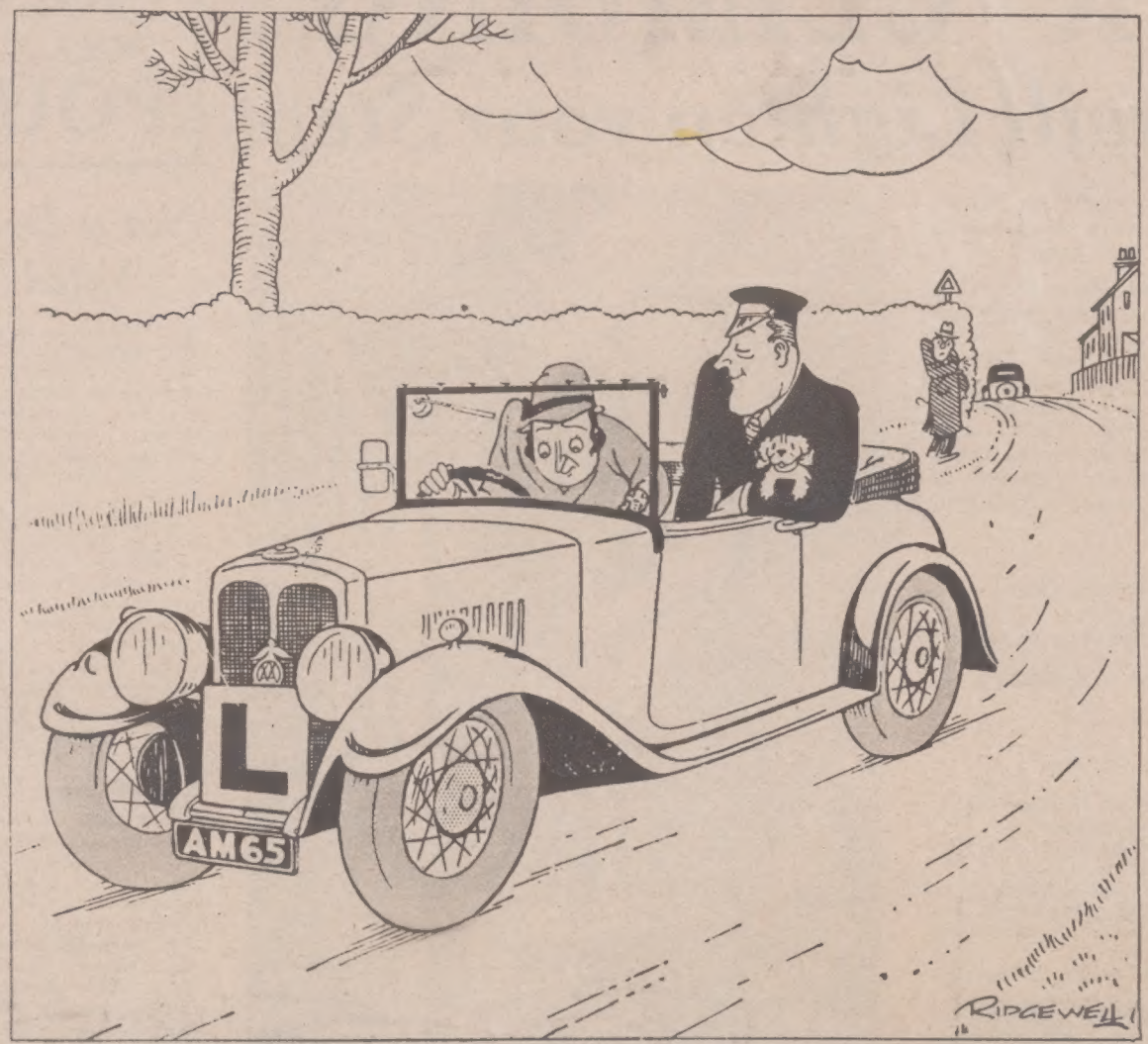

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